TENSIONS IN RHETORICS OF PRESENCE AND PERFORMANCE

by

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STATEMENT OF DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation draws on theories of survivance and rhetorical sovereignty to document and interrogate interactional tensions in rhetorics of presence and performance occurring between selected American Indian students and non-Native faculty, staff, and graduate research assistants within a research-extensive university context. Tensions arise, I argue, because participants hold discrepant beliefs concerning the goal and function of education and the role sovereignty plays in achieving that goal. Discrepancies affect the way participants enact, receive, describe, and interpret presence and performance and determine how effectively Indigenous epistemologies are incorporated within the university. Utilizing tenets of Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies, the study rejects deficit views while remaining cognizant of colonized histories. It gives voice to Indigenous knowledges in practical and applicable ways as it accounts for contemporary educational realities, and it reconceptualizes research and educational praxis from an intercultural perspective. The study finds several factors crucial to supporting American Indian students: an understanding of sovereignty and trust obligations; Native faculty and personnel who are culturally invested, academically skilled, and able to effectively implement culturally responsive curricula; strength-based support; and, administrators and teachers whose praxis addresses Native-identified need and honors Indigenous difference. If university systems are to live up to their rhetoric of support for American Indian educational success, they must address interactional tensions and negotiate to more overtly indigenize the academy. They must suit canon, curriculum, and pedagogy to Native students' separate and specific needs as members of sovereign nations.

For those who have gifted their stories
and for George who always gives his all.

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CHAPTER 1

SELF DETERMINATION THROUGH SELF EDUCATION

> The history of American Indian education can be summarized in three simple words: battle for power (Lomawaima, 2000, p. 2).

This dissertation documents and interrogates interactional tensions in rhetorics of presence and performance occurring between selected Native[1] and non-Native persons within a research-extensive university context. Interactional tensions arise at this site, I argue, because Natives and non-Natives hold discrepant beliefs concerning the role sovereignty plays in the education of Native students. Discrepant beliefs affect the way participants enact, receive, describe, and interpret presence and performance within this system of higher education and determine how (in)effectively Indigenous epistemologies[2] are incorporated within the university. In analyzing participant data, I find that discriminations made in academic environments tend to more highly value demonstrations of European American presence and performance, while ignoring or discrediting Native attempts, including enactments of survivance and rhetorical sovereignty. Ultimately, the tensions participants experience as a result of discriminations

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[1] While noting the debates surrounding naming terminology concerning First Nations people of North America—some may take exception to the terms used in this document or use others—I have chosen to use "American Indian," "Native," and "Indigenous," following current Indigenous Studies scholarship. These terms are used interchangeably in this dissertation.

[2] In this document, I rely on certain key Indigenous Studies scholars' definitions and explications of epistemologies. These scholars assert that, in Indigenous thought, axiologies (ways of valuing) and ontologies (ways of being) are not separable from epistemologies (ways of knowing) and that Native people utilize this understanding to meet the daily challenges of life in their communities. (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001; Maughan, 2008; Meyer, 2003; Nicholls, 2009).

embodied in interpretations of Native presence and performance impede the (re)centering of Indigeneity within higher education and influence the success/failure cycle of some Indigenous[3] programs. If American Indians are to be more successful in completing higher educational degrees, university personnel and programs must address these tensions and negotiate to more overtly indigenize the academy. They must suit canon, curriculum, pedagogy, and administration to Native students' separate and very specific needs as members of sovereign nations.

One program at Western States University[4] attempted such a course of action between 2003 and 2009: the American Indian Teacher Education program, hereafter referred to as AITE. Situated within the College of Education, AITE constituted a site wherein tensions of presence and performance played out in very public ways. AITE began in 2003 with aspirations of providing a top quality university experience for Native students pursuing degrees in education. It was dismantled in 2009. I was a research assistant and writing mentor for students in the program from 2006 to 2008. Along with all involved, I experienced interactional tensions caused by its "self-determination through self-education" approach, an approach I will explain further as I move through this introductory chapter. Because of my unique insider/outsider positioning, I was allowed immediate and visceral access to these tensions. I both participated in and stood apart from them. Some of the tensions I understood; some I did not. Many students I mentored became my friends even as they remained degrees of distance from me. I was an advocate who often inadvertently or by association nevertheless negatively symbolized Whiteness and the results of colonization, those long-standing systems that I came to see often prevented people in the institution and College from seeing sovereignty as a crucial aspect of the program and

[3] "Indigenous" can refer to any or all First Nation peoples across the globe. In this document, the term will be used to specify North American Indian populations unless otherwise noted.
[4] To protect privacy, names of both the university and the program have been changed.

American Indian education more broadly. Sometimes it prevented them from seeing Indigenous students as fully present and competent scholarly performers.

During my time in the program, I was surprised and often dismayed by the ways interactions worked at cross-purposes and created misunderstandings or tensions rather than facilitated communication and productive action. Having recently spent quite some time immersed in Indigenous Studies coursework, I felt especially attenuated to at least some of the undercurrents in these intercultural exchanges. I felt compelled to better understand them. From what was highlighted in my scholarly studies and from what I was experiencing and observing in my intermediary role as research assistant and AITE mentor, I thought I recognized interactional patterns arising from different educational values and goals. I saw these as related to notions of sovereignty, including survivance and rhetorical sovereignty.

After the program was dissolved and as I prepared for my dissertation project, I began reflecting upon my observations and experiences in the AITE program in earnest. AITE thus became the site of this dissertation research, and my reflections allowed me to pose my central research questions:

1. How are tensions in participant constructions of presence and performance related to deeply held convictions concerning sovereignty, including iterations of survivance and rhetorical sovereignty?
2. How are these tensions enacted, received, described, and interpreted by study participants, and with what consequences?

While much could be studied in relation to the program itself and while the program contextualized the study in a specific way, I was mainly interested in Native and non-Native pedagogical interactions within the program. With research questions in mind, then, I began to invite participants involved in and with AITE, namely, American Indian students from 2003-

2008 cohorts along with American Indian project directors, coordinators, research assistants, and staff members from the same time period. I also drew participation from non-Native graduate teaching assistants, students, faculty, and other university personnel involved in program decisions, courses, ancillary work, and events for American Indian students. Then, to provide additional perspective, I asked newspaper reporters and columnists, Writing Center personnel, and Native students not involved in the teacher education program to participate as well. Ideally, participants would be identified by specific tribal affiliation. However, I have chosen not to identify participants in this way for reasons of confidentiality and only note that tribal affiliation varied, as participants came from multiple geographical regions across the United States. While I drew upon a fairly large number of participants for initial observation and interviews, I selected a smaller number to participate further in the research work. Those I selected most often came from the set of participants with whom I had most contact during the timeframe of the study and those who exhibited the most interest. In conducting this study, I felt an imperative to question and understand so that "next time" we could perform our roles more effectively and promote more productive educational experiences for American Indian students.

In this introductory chapter, I give brief background information concerning AITE. I place the program alongside a brief history of sovereignty as understood by particular scholars working within the U.S. educational system. I do so to explain how an understanding of sovereignty is applicable in educational settings and why it requires a tailoring of the education experience to Native needs. This juxtaposition of the program and the larger history of sovereignty also allows me to explore the ways in which meeting the educational needs of Native students can evoke interactional tension. Both are key to understanding the data accumulated during my research, data that allowed me to begin answering my research questions.

Contextualizing AITE and Sovereignty

Title VII of Public Law 107-110 (115 STAT. 1907), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states, "It is the policy of the United States to fulfill the federal Government's unique and continuing trust relationship with and responsibility to the Indian people for the education of Indian children" (20 USC 7401, p. B 27). According to this federal law and as a result of historic treaty agreements made in exchange for land and access to other natural resources, it is the government's duty to provide for "the training of Indian persons as educators and counselors and in other professions serving Indian people" (p. B 28).

Drawing on this trust relationship policy as well as Section 7121: Improvement of Educational Opportunities for Indian Children (20 USC 7441), a Native scholar and staff members in the College of Education at Western University applied for grant money to create a program whereby American Indians could pursue degrees leading to certification and licensure in the educational fields of their choice. Subsequently, in 2003, the United States Department of Education's Office of Indian Education (OIE) awarded a grant of just under a million dollars and thereby provided funding for AITE. In a show of support, the provost's office at Western University allocated an additional $90,000 to assist in funding a center and to cover tuition fees for Native students in the program. Awarding the grant created an opportunity for American Indian/Alaskan Natives to participate in an educational program initiated, implemented, and administered by American Indian faculty and staff under the guiding principle of self-determination through self-education.

Understanding the concept of sovereignty as it applies here requires understanding that Native tribal units hold national sovereign status apart from U.S. federal and state governmental organizations (Lomawaima, 2000; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). After Europeans arrived on the North American continent, they made treaties with the tribal groups already residing there.

The earliest of these treaties occurred between 1722 and 1805 and the last occurred in 1868[5]. These treaties were recognized as legally binding contracts between sovereign nations whereby groups of people were allowed to coexist within designated spaces. As European settlers began to claim land and rights beyond original agreements—maintaining an epistemological rule of might, Manifest Destiny, and private ownership—the U. S. government attempted to change established treaty agreements, resulting in violent struggles and the eventual colonization of the continent (Burkhart, 2004; Deloria, V. 2001; Medicine, 2001; Wilkins, 2002). Despite conquest and colonization, legally binding documents currently state that, in exchange for lands held "in trust," the U.S. government is bound to provide for the health, the welfare, and—of special importance to this study—the education of tribal nations (Wilkins, 2002; Wilkins & Lomawaima, 2002).

Sovereignty, in other words, refers to the power or authority of Indigenous nations to exercise self-governance and independence. David Wilkins (2002) notes that American Indians are the only racialized group in the United Stated to have both a legal and political relationship with the federal government. Other racialized Indigenous groups, such as the Native Hawaiian organization Free Hawaii, are working for similar recognition but have not yet achieved it (see www.freehawaii.org). The "Apology Bill" signed into United States Public Law in 1993 rhetorically regrets the illegal overthrow of Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 but adds a disclaimer stating, "Nothing in this Joint Resolution is intended to serve as a settlement of any claims against the United States." More recently, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act of 2011 (Akaka Bill, S.675) "provides[s] for a *process* " whereby the "special political and legal relationships" promoting the welfare of Indigenous Hawaiian people *might* be recognized

[5] See http://earlytreaties.unl.edu and also http://www.firstpeople.us/FP.Html-Treaties/Treaties.html.

(emphasis added). Sovereignty, whether for American Indians, Native Hawaiians, or other Indigenous peoples, advocates the advancement of at least some form of legally recognized nationhood[6] (Barker, 2005; Bilosi, 2005; Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyom, 2012; Grande, 2000; Shockey, 2001; Wilkins, 2002).

This history of sovereignty places American Indian tribal nations in a difficult situation. On one hand, they assert (indeed, are recognized as having) self-determination, i.e., the right to decide for themselves how they will live their lives and govern their communities. On the other, all aspects of their lives and communities are controlled by a powerful, (one might even say foreign) governing entity. The conflict between these two realities, as one might imagine, has led to sovereignty being a highly contested term. The how and why of its implementation is debated as much within Native communities as between them and non-Native communities (see Weaver, Womack, & Warrior, 2006; Rizvi, 2007; UN Draft Declaration of Indigenous Rights, 2007). Yet, in spite of contesting how and why, this much is clear: sovereignty affirms a Native identity separate from that established by the U.S. government (Lomawaima, 2000) although it is a nation-to-nation identity and status not widely recognized or countenanced in much public rhetoric. Ojibway scholar Scott Lyons (2000) calls sovereignty "an ideal principle," suggesting that the ideal may not always be achieved but indicating that through at least attempting to achieve it Native peoples can "see the paths to agency and power and community renewal" (p. 449).

Many Native peoples today work to reinvigorate legislation whereby the U.S. must recognize these government-to-government trust relations, consequently loosening their

[6] Nationhood is a modern, Western construct that existed in Europe and arose in North America as a result of war and conquest (1812, Civil War, World War I, World War II); in a later chapter, I will more fully detail how the concept of nationhood applies in an American Indian context (Lyons, 2010) and influences integration/separation debates.

controlling grip on Native land, natural resources, and monies[7] as well as living up to contractual agreements concerning self-governance and independence. But the stakes linked to historical and contemporary legal struggles and claims for sovereignty are high. One of these struggles has to do with "land versus property" issues (Grande, 2004, p. 40). As Creek writer Craig Womack (1999) states, "America loves Indian culture; America is much less enthusiastic about Indian land title" (p. 11). We could look to the Eloise Cobel case (Volz, 2010) and the Sardis Lake case in Oklahoma (Barringer, 2011) as recent examples. The Cobel case is a class-action law suit filed in 1996 accusing the Interior and Treasury departments of "stealing and squandering" royalties due American Indians as part of the 1887 Dawes Act, which placed land "in trust" for individual American Indians and promised royalties for oil, gas, grazing, or recreational leases (Nelson, 2011). Although American Indians are owed an estimated $47 billion in royalties, a relatively meager but still welcome $3.4 billion settlement was reached in 2009. In the Sardis Lake case, Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes are currently negotiating for recognition as joint owners with the state of Oklahoma of Sardis Lake water, an act that would help protect the tribes' water rights. At question is whether water claims must be tied to specific land grants and how land allotment and reservation status figures in these claims and grants.

As these political contestations suggest, sovereignty is inherently "tied to land and the people that are linked to the land. Any tactic or strategy employed for the purpose of pursuing Native possibility and power, then, should be tribally specific and . . . should unite the topics of land, sovereignty, and the word" (Gubele, 2008; see also Alfred, 2011; Battiste, 2002; Coffey & Tsosie, 2001). Womack (1999) notes a specific tribal case: the belief that Creeks are "placed in a particular landscape for a reason, not as a matter of chance, that land is the very life and breath of [the Nation], and if [they] part with it, [they] part with [their] blood" (193). Keith Basso (1996)

[7] See for examples Grande, 2004, pp. 76-77.

says relationships with the land are established "most often in the company of other people, and it is on these communal occasions—when places are sensed *together*—that native views of the physical world become accessible to strangers" (p. 109). Landscape thus performs a rhetorical function when, through intercultural exchanges, it becomes imbued with "transcultural" qualities (p. 148). It becomes a space whereby Native views become accessible to non-Natives and vice versa. Since community is often experienced through local geography, the landscape involved in this dissertation becomes a "symbolic vehicle" of communication (Basso, 1996, p. 109), whether in the form of the university campus, buildings, and housing or the local and/or home spaces students have temporarily left.

With this understanding, Cherokee scholar Jace Weaver's (1997) term "communitist" also becomes useful in that it merges the ideas of community and activism to name a commitment to advocacy (Cox, 2006, p. 205). Sovereignty becomes communitist to the degree that it exhibits a "proactive commitment to Native community" (Stromberg, 2006, p. 7; see also Coffey & Tsosie, 2011, on "cultural" sovereignty). Those who criticize sovereignty fear what it allows American Indians to pursue: existence on their own terms, both within Indigenous communities and "in the presence of others" (Lyons, 2000, p. 457). Those who downplay the importance of sovereignty in educational venues (self-determination through self-education) obstruct and curtail Native "possibilities" and power (p. 449; see also Powell, 2002). "Sometimes," says Lyons (2010), pursuing sovereign communities "means adopting new ways of living, thinking, and being that do not necessarily emanate from a traditional cultural source . . . and sometimes it means appropriating the new and changing it to feel more like the old. Sometimes change can make the old feel new again" (p. 33; see Deloria, 1970, for a similar argument). In this way, Lyons indicates that beneficial change can arise from strategic applications of both traditional and contemporary epistemologies.

Given what many Native scholars consider an Indigenous epistemological stance, attempts at sovereignty are undertaken with an accompanying sense of community responsibility and need (see Deloria, 2001; Medicine, 2001). Indigenous Studies scholarship often refers to this sense of community responsibility as self-determination (see Lipka, 2002; Reyhner, 1989). While acknowledging that not all agree on how the term is used or defined, I take self-determination to mean Native communities' abilities to choose, despite external power differentials, collective courses of action that are in their own best interests whether socially, politically, economically, or educationally and to operationalize those choices for highest benefit. Different ways of naming and addressing sovereignty exemplify the ways concepts of national- and self-determination are debated and argued. They are at once politically and rhetorically constructed.

In this introduction, I sketch out points pertinent to sufficiently understand and suggest that sovereignty, whether political or rhetorical, is as Creek scholar K. Tsianina Lomawaima (2000) asserts, "the bedrock upon which any and every discussion of Indian reality today must be built" (p. 3). This brief sketch also makes evident the connections between federal policy and local practice; that is, by providing monetary support for Indigenous education in general and for AITE specifically, the United States government acknowledges sovereignty and a trust relationship with Indigenous Nations as their obligation. This acknowledgment may be subject to change according to the interpretations governmental officials' give at any given historic moment and is thus limited and liminal, but federal policy today nevertheless affirms these obligations (Coffey & Tsosie, 2001).

Understanding that AITE was conceived and implemented with sovereignty in mind illustrates how tensions concerning sovereignty relate to other accompanying concepts important to this dissertation: presence, performance, survivance, and rhetorical sovereignty, for instance. These concepts will be addressed in following chapters of this dissertation. Indeed, the

most basic tension interrogated in this dissertation involved what it meant for Indigenous populations to be present and to perform survivance and rhetorical sovereignty during their educational pursuits within a White dominant higher education system and what that pursuit demonstrated about differences or discrepancies related to self-determination in their education.

At its inception, AITE intended to build upon the possibilities afforded Native students when historic sensibilities and culturally relevant curriculum are addressed at the same time that students are participating in existing AngloAmerican institutionalized programs. The idea was to work from the argument espoused by Linda Cleary and Thomas Peacock (1998), among others, which is that "The key to producing successful American Indian students, . . . is to first ground these students in their American Indian belief and value systems" (p. 101; see also Brayboy & Castagno, 2008). Such an approach was designed to counteract the challenges that, according to current scholarship, impede American Indian success in educational endeavors (see the National Study of American Indian Education, 1967-1971 and Special Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education Summary Report, 1969 as cited in Reyhner & Eder, 2004). Scholars have variously named these challenges as poor preparatory education, lack of community role models, alienation from self and community, resistance due to hostile environments, and psychological and educational withdrawal (see also Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyom, 2012).

AITE attempted to acknowledge these challenges and address them where possible. A Native scholar worked as Director and Principal Investigator on the federal OIE grant, and other Native persons worked as staff (Project Director, Project Coordinator, and Administrative Assistant). The program drew participation from multiple and varied tribal communities across the U.S., yet it was designed to work from a premise of epistemological commonalities across those communities. Understanding epistemologies in this way does not imply sameness across differing tribal traditions, histories, and languages. It does, however, suggest that across these

tribal cultures and geographies, Indigenous peoples value relatedness, respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. These values in turn influence how and why Native peoples come to be, do, and know. As Wallace Coffey and Rebecca Tsosie (2001) note, different Native communities may have distinct cultures and traditions yet maintain the "profound significance" and common valuation of "sovereignty, tradition, and history" (p. 197). In a like manner, the educational environment AITE students participated in together was designed to include Indigenous systems of knowing, being, and valuing broadly. Native faculty, staff, and students made a point to follow, for example, the "group-based structure of tribal societies" (p. 197) and encourage social cohesiveness. Program participants convened informally in offices, apartments, and the American Indian Resource Center, which reinforced reliance on one another as resources and acknowledged a Native valuing of nurturing relationships.

The original grant provided funding for a three-year program. Students were provided access to material support and resources: moving expenses, tuition, a stipend, a laptop computer and printer, health insurance, childcare assistance, books, educational fees, tutoring services, and close mentoring (one might even say supervision) until they completed their academic programs. They also received individual and group mentoring for math, writing, and educational examinations such as the nationally standardized PRAXIS exam. This academic, social, financial, and emotional assistance was offered to help students be more fully present in a sometimes unfamiliar academic environment and enable them to focus more completely on their studies, thus increasing the chance of success in the performances the institution would require of them.

Students who had already completed their sophomore years of study applied to the AITE from rural, urban, and reservation communities all across the United States. They qualified for admission into Western University under regular admissions policies and entered in cohorts as college juniors. They subsequently completed upper-division coursework within the

various education programs of their choice before attaining licensure and finally entering Indian-serving school systems as teachers, counselors, or administrators. In most cases, salaried faculty members of the University taught the pre-existing series of courses. If instructors agreed to teach during the summer, they were given an additional stipend, as per university protocol. While AITE provided numerous supports and resources from an Indigenous perspective, neither course-of-study instructors nor curricula were changed to accommodate AITE students. The various departments that undertook to work with them assumed the reverse. They assumed Native students would accommodate the already established instructors, courses, and schedules of their chosen departmental studies.

A student who participated in one of the early cohorts aptly described the goal of AITE as improving the quality of university experience for Native students and giving back to Native communities. Speaking of his fellow cohort, he said: "We all talk about wanting to go back to our towns and reservations." Bettering individual educational experience and giving back to the community was thus not only the goal, it was the stipulation of this payback program. Participating students agreed to teach in Indian-serving schools (1.5% of population as defined by the OIE) for the same number of years as they received support. If they failed to achieve licensure or failed to teach, they were obligated to reimburse the federal government for services received during the program. To assist them in making the transition from students to teachers, they were also afforded professional mentoring during their first year of employment, their induction year as teachers, for a total of 3 years of support.

The success of the program was quite remarkable. In the 6 years of its existence at Western University, AITE graduated 4 cohorts of more than 40 American Indians prepared to teach, counsel, or provide leadership. To put that number in perspective, from 1979 to 2002—the 24 years previous to AITE—the College of Education awarded degrees to a total of only 14

Native students: two BAs and twelve MAs ([Western University] Office of Budget and Institutional analysis, 2007). From 14 to 40 is a notable difference especially given the difference in the number of years it took to accomplish, and it means that 40 Native graduates have worked or are currently working in Indian-serving communities from Alaska to Michigan.

When the first grants ended, additional grants were secured in 2004, 2005, and 2006. In 2007, two additional applications for OIE grants were written by AITE directors and staff members: one to provide distance education for paraprofessionals hoping to become licensed teachers and one to train new math and science teachers. These applications were made so that the College of Education could provide the money necessary to continue the program, and they could have done so since OIE granted funding for these two projects and the University initially accepted it. University administrators wrote letters of support, as did the Chairman of a local tribe. With the statistical fact of success and the support of the University, one would think the program would be hailed as a stellar model of American Indian education. It was publically touted as evidence of the University's support of Indigenous populations and a site of important educational research. Various documents, conference presentations, articles, and dissertations were produced during this time on culturally relevant education, standardizing practices in American Indian education, and rhetorical sovereignty under disciplinary and institutional constraints.

Yet, in spite of facilitating the means of educational success for a significant number of American Indian teachers, counselors, and administrators, as of spring semester 2009 AITE ceased to exist. Key faculty members and personnel took positions at other universities, and the 2007 grant monies, totaling slightly over two million dollars, were returned to the OIE by College of Education and university administration. Since the demise of AITE, at least three attempts by College of Education faculty and staff to secure OIE funding through similar grants

have been unsuccessful, an indication of how economic, national/tribal, social, and educational politics often become an issue in American Indian education.

The Recurring Narrative

The short history of AITE thus serves to establish in a localized setting a recurring narrative of American Indian education: the success/failure story so often (re)recorded and (re)enacted when American Indian persons and communities attempt to enact self-determination within predominantly AngloAmerican institutions. To better understand this educational history, we could look at the example of the Rough Rock Demonstration School. Rough Rock Demonstration School officially began on the Navajo Nation in 1966, and it continues today although politics of the type described above have periodically interfered with its success. As with AITE, funding was an issue for Rough Rock, but it was not the main issue. As with AITE, the main issue was self-determination or sovereignty. Administrators in the U.S. educational system held discrepant beliefs about its existence and its role in the education of American Indians. In an initial report of the state of the school, Director Robert Roessel, Jr. (1968) outlined the "ifs" and "shoulds" concerning the ways sovereignty affects Native education in this way:

> If the Bureau of Indian Affairs and public school systems believe the answers to problems facing Indians in the field of education lie in 'more of the same,' and if they believe that the solution to these problems rests primarily in more money, the significance of Rough Rock will have been lost. Unfortunately, there are many signs today that many people in high places in Indian education are of the opinion that Indian education can best be improved through more efficient centralized administration combined with more money placed in the hands of professional educators.
>
> On the other hand, if the BIA and public school systems finally recognize the problems affecting Indians in schools demand not more of the same, but a radial new departure and new approach, then Rough Rock stands vindicated and its significance will never be lost. In a very real way, the significance of Rough Rock is based on two factors: *First, control of Indian education by Indian people, and second, the incorporation into the school curriculum of positive elements of Indian life and culture.* (emphasis added)

> Should the agencies and individuals having responsibilities for Indian education realize that *Indian people must control and direct their education*, and should the Congress of the United States see fit to act upon the President's message on Indians and provide funds to carry out the suggested programs, then certainly Rough Rock's future ought to be assured by becoming perhaps the first 'Model Community School.' (p. 7 web, emphasis added)

Twenty-six years later, Galena Sells Dick, Dan Estell, and Teresa McCarty (1994) reflected on the challenges experienced at Rough Rock, noting it as a story of struggle in the face of inadequate and inconsistent federal funding, teacher turnover, curricular instability, and "erratic" language and culture instruction (p. 1 web). In a concurrent article, Nancy Hornberger (1994) noted that site instability and uncertain federal funding were key factors working against the success of Rough Rock.

However, as Dick, Estell, and McCarty (1994) reiterate, Rough Rock could still be said to demonstrate success because the program was able to maintain i) a core of administrative and teaching staff who were members of the community, ii) funding at levels that permitted staff development, iii) long-term collaborations with outside professionals, and iv) program development by those responsible for implementing it (p. 10, web). Successes such as these could not have occurred if they were viewed as top-down, short-term processes. Rather they had to "emerge from sustained collaboration in which educators [were] supported in constructing learning environments similar to those they [were] building for their students" (p. 10, web): i.e., control of Indigenous education by Indigenous persons and implementation of culturally responsive and respectful curriculum. Curriculum could not simply be brought in from sources outside the community but rather had to "reinforce concepts developed at home and in the community, while still meeting state and federal requirements" (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1994, p. 40).

The literature suggests that when difficulties are encountered in educational contexts such as these, they should be resolved by "going into the community and discussing the program

and its objectives with parents and elders" (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1994, p. 38). They should be resolved through community meetings as well as individual, face-to-face communication—by talking and listening—and by incorporating "community values" (p. 38). The kind of talking and listening referenced here requires self-reflexivity and a willingness to maintain the needs of the community ahead of individual and financial interests (Meyer, 2003; Powell, 2002; Ratcliffe, 2011). Such an approach affords flexibility, adaptability, and ultimately success.

Notably, in 2009, while attending ceremonial groundbreaking for a $52.5 million Recovery Project at the Rough Rock site, then Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley remarked that Rough Rock stands as "a symbol of tribal self-determination." Shirley's remark is notable in that it reminds us of the school's community involvement and culturally relevant curriculum at the same time that it points toward the project's source of funding, funding that allows Native curriculum to continue. In this case, the "project is funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and is being carried out under the Indian Affairs Office of Facilities, Environmental and Cultural Resources (OFECR) in conjunction with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIA), the Navajo Nation and the Rough Rock Community School" (web).[8]

If universities, Indigenous communities, and researchers today are striving for sustained, long-term "collaborations" (Lipka & Ilutsik, 1995, p. 196) to benefit Indigenous education, as the initial implementation and rhetoric surrounding programs like Rough Rock and AITE suggests, then we need to think carefully about how to implement the long term factors many find crucial for their success, factors which point directly toward the importance of Indigenous sovereignty (see also Watahomigie, 1995). These factors were and are equally visible at other

[8] Article retrieved from http://recovery.doi.gov/press/2009/09/project-underway-to-replace-rough-rock-community-school/.

sites, sites such as the Hualapai community's bilingual/bicultural education program at Peach Springs (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1994). To reiterate, these factors include the following:

- Trust obligation funding
- Indigenous governance and control
- Culturally responsive curriculum
- Culturally invested and academically skilled administrators and teachers
- Community involvement and communication
- Problem-solving through talking and listening

Given how crucial these factors are, it becomes necessary for AngloAmerican administrators and institutions to change their current understandings of what Indigenous self-determination entails and how it can or should be implemented within university systems. Changing understandings and approaches to accommodate these factors, however, requires a good amount of community (re)education in the form of "reverse brainwashing"[9] to counteract contradictory stances regarding how worthwhile these changes are (p. 38). (Re)education means attending to tensions concerning the viability and effectiveness of sovereign approaches, including broad levels of academic, social, economic, and political support. In the case of this dissertation, (re)education means attending to tensions between educational administrators, faculty, staff, students, and communities.

While AITE presents a different site and context than Rough Rock and Hualapai—it occurred in a postsecondary educational institution rather than a primary one, and its funding was returned to the OIE by university administrators (an historic precedence) rather than continued and increased—the comparison nonetheless underscores some of the specific tensions surrounding American Indian education. Native and non-Native interlocutors need to examine together discrepant and deeply held convictions about what it means to be self-determining and to enact sovereignty, what it means to be "present" and to perform as "good"

[9] See Grande (2004) and Smith (1999) on decolonization.

or "competent" students, teachers, authority figures, and/or community members in an educational context. Interlocutors must work to communicate and negotiate those convictions more effectively. This is the work of my dissertation.

A core and contested component of these rhetorical negotiations originates in the implications of power and control residing in sovereignty. As understood by most non-Natives, sovereignty is only a vague concept having to do with, as one participant says, "ruling" and as another says, "ownership." For still other non-Native participants, sovereignty connotes the "freedom" extended by the U.S. government to Indigenous people that enabled them "to make choices." In most public rhetoric, sovereignty is defined in terms of the individual and is a tool whereby individual rights are maintained, rather than in terms of "the group-based structure of tribal societies," in which case sovereignty has "'instrumental' rather than 'intrinsic' value" (Coffey & Tsosie, 2001, p. 197). Womack (1999), however, points out that sovereignty "is inherent as an intellectual idea in Native cultures, a political practice, and a theme of oral traditions; and the concept, as well as the practice, predates European contact" (p. 51). Looked at in this light, we can see that sovereignty regarding Indigenous populations really has as much to do with recentering Indigeneity within U.S. social, and, for the express purposes of this study, educational contexts as it does with current politics and legalities. Indeed, Deloria (1976) writes that sovereignty is more usefully defined as a "process of growth and awareness" characterized by Native peoples "working toward and achieving maturity" in community relationships (p. 28). If structured solely in a legal-political context, sovereignty becomes a "limiting" and adversarial concept, "which serves to prevent solutions" and "precludes both understanding and satisfactory resolution of difficulties" (p. 28). My discussion of sovereignty, then, necessarily broadens in Chapter 2 to include presence, performance, survivance, and rhetorical sovereignty

and the ways these concepts help us understand processes of (re)centering within educational contexts.

Interchapters

One way the sense of this project will be communicated in text is through the use of interchapters. Interchapters are short chapters inserted between the more conventionalized ones normally found in dissertations and other publications.[10] I use interchapters to present and re-center scenarios, transcripts of interviews, rivaling excerpts, interpretations, and scripted poetic stanzas from research data. Some interactions presented in the interchapters occurred early on in data collection and others occurred later. Because this study deliberately focuses on intercultural exchanges, interchapters become a useful tool in helping readers more fully envision (perhaps even participate in) the exchanges. This choice brings form to function in that, "We no longer just write culture. We perform culture" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. x). In this case, interchapters perform intercultural negotiations.

For the idea of using interchapters I owe much to Harry Denny (2010), who, in *Facing the Center*, states he was inspired to "attempt to transcend the boundaries of conventional chapters" (p. 29) as a way to model "a different way of doing critical exchange" (p. 30) through text. Denny credits his inspiration to Donna LeCourt (2004), Joseph Harris (1997), and Mark Hurlbert and Michael Blitz (1991) whose texts provided readers with innovative ways to slow down and think carefully about how disrupting conventions helps us envision different possibilities regarding how we perceive the presentation of content, concepts, and experiences. In the use of interchapters, I also draw on the interim chapter forms found in Gian Pagnucci's (2004) *Living the narrative life: Stories as a tool for meaning making* and Gregory Michie's (2009) *Holler*

[10] Because of institutional thesis office formatting constraints, interchapters will be presented here as subheadings at the end of chapters rather than as separate entities between chapters.

if you hear me: The education of a teacher and his students. I use interchapter formatting to create presence and to unpack performance. Interchapters allow the reading audience to vicariously (re)enact and embody moments of tension. Interchapters help readers more fully listen and respond to the immediacy of the moment and/or event. Inserted in places between, interchapters additionally remind readers of liminal spaces and those who inhabit those spaces. It makes readers aware of difference and makes visible their reactions when their notions of difference bump up against conventionalized authority.

Some scholars, such as Abraham Romney (2011) resist ideas of between-ness because they imply an inside/outside binary. Romney proffers instead the terms "within" or, like LuMing Mao (2010), "coterminous" (p. 18), thus hoping to disrupt connotations of in(ex)clusion. To my mind, these distinctions with their representational connotations only serve to amplify the ongoing debates regarding integration and separation as I discuss them in Chapter 2. I argue these distinctions must not be lost in the debates. To do so would be to ignore the actual political sovereign status of Native tribal units as set apart from AngloAmerican nation states. The buffering (softening) implied in any of these terms, to some degree reinforces the myth of a single, unified nation and disregards the very real differences experienced by Native and non-Native communities. It also disregards the very real material consequences that accrue because of these differences. Attending to difference via interchapters—whether regarded as liminal, between, within, or coterminous—is an innovation drawn from an Indigenous epistemological approach that will be discussed further in following chapters. Hence, such a format is highly applicable to how this research project is presented textually. Theory, methodology, and method are extended in this way.

To outline, Interchapters 1 and 2 present interactions between AITE students, graduate mentors, and instructors that were recorded as field notes. They introduce key research

participants and present Native and non-Native exchanges that occurred in a mandatory, supplemental instruction setting. Interchapter 1 focuses on illustrating survivance. Interchapter 2 focuses on illustrating rhetorical sovereignty. Interchapter 3 is a reflective document written by a non-Native participant in response to a focus group rivaling session. Then, in Interchapter 4, I offer data that scripts, juxtaposes, and overlaps interview excerpts to demonstrate how textual rivaling occurs and how participants interpret the excerpts to evoke meaning from the data. In Interchapter 5, I move from rivaling field notes to presenting interview data as conceptual chunks. I present selected quotes from transcribed participant interviews that illustrate overlapping concepts related to ideas of community: community as survivance, as presence, and as performance, for instance. Finally, I present one Native participant's reflection concerning discrepant Indigenous and EuroWestern epistemologies. It is constructed as a poem and used as an end piece. Because of their rich detail, the interchapter scenarios and texts move us from reflecting on introductory, macro level context to examining core, micro level exchanges. Interchapters introduce Native and non-Native interactions that are subtle but rife with tension. They allow us to see how sovereignty or self- and community-determination frame both the focus and findings of this study. They also prepare us for fuller methodological and method explications and analysis.

I provide these interchapter exchanges realizing there is much to attend to in terms of issues undergirding interactional exchanges: assumptions about ability, including (in)ability to see competence; obligation and reciprocity; trust; and, finally, marked resistance and acquiescence, to name some of the most salient. Throughout these scenarios we find participants attempting to wield elements of control, with Native students struggling toward self-determination through self-education. The questions readers must ask at this point are how, exactly, do we pay attention to these elements in this context, and how do we interpret them? These questions will be

answered in greater depth as this dissertation proceeds, with the methodology and methods section providing valuable ways to help us look at and understand presence and performance in the liminal spaces of this research site.

Interchapter 1: Observable Tensions

The "Supplemental Instruction for AITE Students" (SI) is held on the main floor of the College of Education building. On its three floors, the building houses various departments, offices, classrooms, an instructional media lab, and the Education Network. A computer lab is also on the main floor, easily accessed just across the hall and down a couple of doors from where we are meeting. Since my colleague, Lisa,[11] and I received word only minutes before that we have been approved to observe the session, we arrive a little late. We are both research assistants and writing mentors for the AITE. Lisa has been with the program from the beginning, while I have only worked seven months thus far. We check the room where we have been told the SI will be held but see no one. We then check a couple of adjacent rooms, thinking we may have been given the wrong room number, but the rooms are empty. We are relieved when Mahalia, an AITE student, shows up and directs us to the right room. As we enter, we chat briefly about who should be coming and whether we have been given the correct time. Mahalia tells us that, yes, we have the right time. She speculates why others are late: problems with childcare, she guesses, or a car broken down, or maybe studying for another exam. She says everyone typically pulls chairs into a circle for discussion; so, the three of us bring nine chairs from the standard block of eight by eight into a circle at the front of the room. Lisa sits at the south point of the circle. Mahalia sits to one side of her and I to the other.

[11] All participants have been given pseudonyms to protect confidentiality.

The room is standard in classroom design: rectangular, in decent repair (no cracks in the tan brick, no stains yet on the white, painted wall, no gouges in the linoleum flooring), but like the entire building, the room shows definite signs of age. Nothing has been updated in quite a while. Three large paned windows cover most of the west wall and look out onto a canopied walkway leading to the main entrance of the building. Under the windows, a bank of medium-sized radiators, also painted white, ping and hum. The windows are covered with old, tan curtains, parts of which are unhooked and hanging unevenly at the top. They are pulled shut to block some of the cold seeping in from this brusque February afternoon. They block the cold, but also most of the natural, outside light.

The SI has been scheduled for one hour every Monday afternoon and participants have been meeting since the beginning of the semester. Our recent invitation has been extended for the rest of the semester at the insistence of AITE directors since sitting in will help us better understand the assignments and thus assist the students in completing them. Attendance at the SI is considered mandatory for AITE students. The three instructors responsible for overseeing the session manage what happens during the activity, and they are quite concerned about its success. Today, they have instructed students to bring any written assignments due for a legal issues class they are currently taking. This is meant to forestall the possibility of failing an assignment; unfortunately, it indicates instructors are perhaps unwittingly operating under an assumption of underlying deficit. That assumption, along with the extra measure of control a 'mandatory' session like this exerts, doesn't sit very well with at least two of the five students, and earlier—while in AITE office space—these students expressed some resentment about it. To be expected to attend this meeting in addition to already packed-to-the-brim course schedules (not to mention family and other community obligations) is almost an insult, one they swallow because they know it is well-intentioned. My sense of the situation is they feel they

should be grateful; after all, their education is being paid for, so they should reciprocate by being present.

Earlier in the day, I worked with Mahalia on a paper due for the class to be held that evening. We worked for an hour and a half, and she seemed to feel pretty good about the results. I did too because she seemed much more prepared for her writing consultation this week. A couple of weeks ago, we had a session that did not help her progress much at all. She had only a rough, hand written draft to work with, and I did not have a good idea of the assignment requirements. After today's session, she worked another hour by herself. Now, when I ask her about it, she comments that right now she is more concerned about an assignment for another class, a vocabulary test. She mentions building flash cards to help her study, shows them to us, and begins to quickly and silently work through them.

Mary, a Native student and SI facilitator who has recently finished her MA exams, enters and sits one chair away from me. Lisa has worked extensively with Mary on her writing for the past couple of years while Mary completed her certification. I have worked occasionally with her over the last few months. After a few minutes, another participant, Janet, comes through the door with her 4-year-old son in tow, apologizing for having to bring him, and telling us she has made arrangements for babysitting in the future. She worries in an aside to me that he will have a hard time sitting still. She sits down. He begins to explore the room. Ruth, a graduate instructor, arrives with two more students, Connie and Dana, apologizing for being a little late. She tells us the other faculty members are excused today. They are preparing for a conference presentation on campus that evening. Ruth sits next to Mary and engages her in a conversation about a conference she attended during the summer. She addresses some comments directly to me because I indicate I am familiar with the work of the conference presenters she is speaking

about. She says these scholars' work might be important, considering the students' cultural backgrounds and future work with Indigenous populations.

Dana sits across the room on the west side. She crosses her legs, then crosses her arms, and then puts her head down into her hands, letting her hair fall across her face. She begins to tap her foot. Connie sits to Dana's right. Her bag of books and papers remains closed. General informal discussion begins between the students: Where are you with the assignment? Are you coming over to the apartment later? Did you get the power point from class yesterday?

Ruth gets the session started. "Does anyone have anything they'd like me to take a look at?" No up-take. "Do you all have your papers for this evening?" A couple of heads nod. Janet says she has a draft that needs editing and asks Lisa if she will take a look. We entered the session prepared to merely observe; but, since Janet has asked for assistance and the instructors do not object, we become participants. Whether Ruth sees this as a good-faith move of inclusion, a test to see how well we perform, or a taken-for-granted part of our being there, I am not sure. Neither am I sure whether we are viewed as colleagues or as apprentices. We could be both. As PhD students and research assistants, we are fairly savvy about academic discourse in general, but we are not nearly as knowledgeable in this specialized content area. I have also not progressed as far in my program of study as Lisa, and I think it is apparent. Additionally, I suspect students may not trust me yet. They are respectful but seem to value Lisa's advice more. They try to make consultation appointments first with her or others and then me if no one else is available. She has established a rapport with the students I wish I had. That said, neither of us have as much clout as instructors when it comes to writing instruction in the formalized, highly standardized genres of their course of study, and rightly so. It is not personal; it is mostly a disciplinary function. Then, too, we are both White; we need to prove ourselves: our

understanding, respect, knowledge, ability, and desire to work with them. I wonder how aware the instructors are of this dynamic.

Janet says she just needs to go print off her paper and receives permission to go to the computer lab. She asks if we will keep on eye on her son until she gets back. He scoots a couple of chairs together, pushes them across the floor with a screech, and then climbs up to fiddle with the buttons on the media center fixed to the wall. Connie tries to distract him with some paper and a pencil. Others try to ignore the commotion and concentrate on the session. Ruth asks Mahalia about her paper. Mahalia mentions that she worked on it with me earlier in the day. Ruth nods, but then suggests that she should also take a look, so Mahalia moves over to the desk on my right and they begin to work. At that point—15 or more minutes into the session—one more student, Lillian, comes in. She sits on Dana's right but keeps her coat on. Dana finally looks up at Ruth and asks:

"So, I have a question. About the assignment. Does [the professor] want us to just read the text and regurgitate the information?"

"Well, I think she wants you to use the text and class discussion to answer the question."

"So regurgitate it."

"Well, let's look at the question. It has three parts. Right? So, you'll want to be sure to answer each part. I think she wants to make sure you understand each of the parties' responsibilities concerning inclusion."

"Yeah, like summarize."

Ruth begins to outline what students might say in each of the three sections of the assignment and specifically asks Dana, "Do you want me to look at what you have?"

"No. I need to go work on it."

"Do you want to print off what you have?"

It is more a restrained command than a question.

Connie speaks for Dana, saying, "Her thumb drive is messed up." Dana concurs and explains, "It was working fine the last time I used it." Connie says that it looks like a part is bent. Everyone chimes in then, worried that they might lose information and homework if their thumb drives also go bad. They begin talking over one other. Is everyone else's USB drive working? Yes, but printer cartridges are out of ink. What should we do about that? Are there other places to print besides the lab across the hall? Who is responsible for buying cartridges? How much does it cost? Where can you get refills? How can we get the computer lab technicians to help us when we have a problem? In the mounting noise, Dana's frustration erupts: "Well, can I leave and go work on it?" To which Ruth replies, "Okay," and both Dana and Lillian leave.

Janet returns and Lisa prepares to help her with her paper. She tries to walk her through correcting some of the mechanical errors. Janet excuses herself to stop her son from running around the room and jamming chairs into other chairs. She picks him up and stands next to Lisa, trying to pay attention. Lisa begins again, talking about why something in the paper needs to be changed. Janet's son begins to whine. She tries to quiet him. Lisa tries to continue, but Janet's son begins to cry. Lisa still tries to address the next element. He cries louder and attempts to wiggle out of Janet's arms. She holds him tighter. The crying escalates. I suggest she send the document to us via email, but she and Lisa agree that since there's only a paragraph left and because it's due this evening, they should try to finish.

Meanwhile, Mahalia and Ruth on my right ask me a question about ending a sentence with a preposition. I assure them that it is now considered a viable sentence option, but Ruth asks how it might be reworded anyway. We figure it out. I ask Mahalia to send me a copy of the corrections made during the session so I will know how to better address specifics the next time.

Janet sighs and apologizes to everyone about the distraction. The hour is over. We all pack up, put on our coats, and leave.

Lisa and I walk back up to the AITE offices. AITE is housed in what is called the Annex, a two-story clapboard building with four wings that was originally built during World War II. It was supposed to be a temporary structure but was never torn down. In addition to AITE, it houses the Upward Bound/TRIO program, ESL classrooms for international students (where they are taught U.S. language and culture) and the Utah Opportunity Scholarship offices. Students joke it is the place to segregate students of color from White ones. On the way up the hill, we talk about what went awry in the session, noting the resistance from students and the pushback from the instructor. We have to admit that we ourselves experienced internal resistance, and we try to analyze why.

I remind Lisa of something Connie said during an introductory mentoring session, something about realizing early on that the department thought AITE students' writing skills "were not up to snuff" or "good enough" and that students hadn't "earned [their] spot at this table." At the time, Connie expressed some resentment at the need to "prove [herself] worthy to be in this White environment," but also an intense drive to "prove" that she had indeed "earned [her] spot here." Another student expressed similar concerns and said, "I'm not going to be the one that proves what they thought. I'm going to prove them wrong." If there was a perception of 'deficit' in the students, we concluded, maybe it had more to do with lack of time and/or resource management skills, and unidentified genre expectations or disciplinary apprenticeship as much as "writing problems" per se. Instructors—and I include myself in this category—are already fluent in their disciplinary genres and rhetorics, so much so that they have trouble conveying how to acquire them to others, specifically these students. I also have to wonder,

though, about a history of colonization and epistemological difference as well as degrees of preferred integration and separation.

CHAPTER 2

DEFINITIONS, DEBATES, AND A DISH OF SEVEN-LAYER BEAN DIP

> Big Man was say, 'Ain't that a little naïve? A Red book?' Rabbit was answer, 'Only if you believe white always swallows up Red. I think Red stays Red, most ever time, even throwed in with white. Especially around white. It stands out more.' (Womack, 1999, p. 24).

> [S]overeignty is not a separatist discourse. . . . It is a restorative process (Grande, 2004, p. 57).

Scholars have used the key concepts of this dissertation—presence, performance, survivance, and rhetorical sovereignty—in different ways and for different purposes. It therefore seems wise to begin this chapter by offering the definitions that guide my usage along with explanations to help concretely imagine their meaning and how they will be useful in understanding research data. In offering these definitions, I discuss prominent Indigenous Studies scholarship regarding current and ongoing debates as well as overviews of related literatures coming out of Philosophy of Education, Social and Cultural Anthropology of Education, and Rhetoric and Composition scholarship. I review these literatures to link the document both backward and forward: backward to the introductory information and forward to the discussion of methodology and methods.

First, however, I would like to say something about the problematic nature of definitions in general. While providing definitions is an accepted academic convention, there is some risk in delineating concepts this way. Doing so suggests they can be reliably distinguished with no messiness or overlap. This is an inaccurate portrayal that may even do some linguistic violence. When employed as a EuroWestern perspective, definitions often function to divide, establish control, exhibit mastery, and keep everything neatly in its 'proper' (status quo) place. While the

concepts presented here can be thought of as delineated—indeed, it is helpful to think about them that way so we get a firm grip on each one—they can also be thought of as parts of the same whole taken up in multiple acts.

In thinking about the conceptual relationships between presence, performance, survivance, rhetorical sovereignty, and community, I encourage us to envision a dish of 7-layer bean dip (Brayboy, personal communication, December 3, 2008). We can think of these concepts as residing in layers "all the way down" (King, 2003). When we first bring the bean dish to the party, it has a neat and orderly presentation. Each layer is distinct. Think about the quote that introduces this chapter, Craig Womack's Red staying Red especially around White. When we put in our chips, scoop the ingredients up, and begin to eat, our palates experience each flavor (concept) as separate and distinct, and it tastes pretty good. As the party continues, however, things begin to get messy. The layers begin to slide into one another, and the different flavors and textures—not so much distinct now as complimentary to one another—actually give us a better sense of how the whole dish works (or in other instances does not work) together. This is when the experience gets really good. Later in the evening, it occurs to us that when the dish was originally put together someone made a decision to spread sour cream over everything else—White covering up Red—and then we have to think hard about what that decision implies.

So while definitional divisions are expected conventions, I repeat my request to envision the concepts not as falling along a linear continuum but rather as existing in layers within the same relational space. As these definitions and explanations work in relational layers, not only do they disrupt the neatness of the status quo, they also better reflect an Indigenous worldview wherein all aspects of life—whether animate or inanimate—are considered interconnected. With that said, I turn now to provisionally defining the concepts important to this project as they will be used in this dissertation, beginning with presence.

Presence

By presence, I mean both representation and embodied existence. Native representation and embodied experience tease each other, as Vizenor (1994) suggests, in that they force a simultaneous confrontation of "Indian" simulation and postindian actuality. I use scare quotes around the term "Indian" because it is an invention, of course, concocted by explorers who thought they had reached India. Louis Owens' (2001) essay, "As If an Indian Were Really an Indian," describes how settlers on the North American continent continued the term as a "loan word of dominance" (p. 15) and "surveillance . . . resulting in an utter absence of certainty of self" (p. 17). Simulation, then, refers to fabricated representations that have accumulated over the duration of contact, i.e., the "vanishing Indian" or "stoic Indian" or "Brave/Savage" figurations that are still present in much media, text, and imagination today and that can trick or tease Natives and non-Natives into questioning their roles in contemporary society (see Haas, 2010). It points to any representation that assumes, promotes, or continues the idea of a natural or inevitable European ("civilized") colonization of the exotic ("primitive") Americas. Conversely, postindian actuality refers to the concrete material lives of both historic and contemporary American Indians. A contemporary materiality, for example, includes AITE students sitting together in majoritarian classrooms for the duration of their coursework. In another instance, it refers to these same students inviting graduate student mentors into their residential dorms on a Friday night for a scrapbooking party, and impressing those mentors with their senses of humor, creativity, and ironic twists on popular culture.

Although many would like to believe otherwise, "Indian" simulations have not disappeared. Imagine, for instance, the packaging of Land o' Lakes margarine, ubiquitous on grocery store shelves across the U.S.; imagine as well children following along as Disney's Peter Pan and the Lost Boys go "off to fight the Injuns, the Injuns, the Injuns;" or, imagine the 2009

movie hit *Avatar* as a spin-off of *Pocahontas*. Helmbrecht Breinig (2008) tells us that simultaneous confrontations with simulation and actuality in the context of "interethnic relations and discourses" can "result in a network of tensions" (p. 46). These are tensions I and the other participants in this research have felt, and each instantiation—whether simulation or actuality—brings to mind power relationships: the power to name and define who and what people 'are' or what they 'should be doing' and what this 'being' or 'doing' represents. One reason tensions occur is because historical conquest has led to the present demographic moment, by which I mean, as Malea Powell (2002) notes, the literal "absence of thousands of others . . . removed from the arena of daily American life" (p. 403) who would otherwise be present.

Paying attention to the presence/absence and being/doing conundrum regarding the roles Natives and non-Natives play in this study thus becomes terribly important. Paying attention means we confront difference and the consequences of conquest. It means Natives can no longer be simply "imagined" as stereotypes or "storied back to an absence . . . in history" (Vizenor, 1999, p. 86). Native presence is felt in Amelia Katanski's (2005) explanation of Silko's photography. As representational art, it "encourages the storytelling that keeps the community alive—demonstrating the ability of Indian people to use Western form as part of their repertoires of representation to promote goals not sanctioned by European American society" (p. 24). An example of Native youths disputing stereotypes to keep their community alive recently occurred in response to the ABC documentary "Children of the Plains." Native high school students produced a documentary of their own wherein they storied simulations and/or absences (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhribaNXr7A&sns=fb) from their experiences. Similarly, Native participants in this study, through their active presence and performance, also storied simulations/absences. They did so in many ways, including those that might be called representational, and one way, as mentioned earlier, was by scrapbooking. Some might discount

the practice of scrapbooking as insignificant. I assert it can be a photographic and textual art form that promotes presence beyond the current moment. Through this art form, participants documented family and community histories. The ways they used scrapbooking demonstrated a knowledgeable and purposeful storytelling that counteracted dominant simulations. By representing their contemporary realities, participants struggled against discourses of dominance, tragedy, and "victimry" (Vizenor, 1994, p. vii). Further, by participating in AITE and this research, they contributed new stories they hoped would "[steer] the current course of events," whether political, social, or educational (Breinig, 2008, p. 56).

In contributing to those new stories, Native participants are—to use Vizenor's (1994) term—postindian warriors, and their assertion of presence over absence and doing over being confirms an ability to affect the course of social, political, and educative events. Postindian warriors, Vizenor tells us, "surmount" and "counter" surveillance and "literature[s] of dominance" to "contravene the absence of the real" and provide stories of actual presence and performance. As Irving Goffman (1967) says, "Let a participant whom others would rather see silent make a statement, and [that participant] will have expressed the belief that [s/]he has a full right to talk and is worth listening to, thereby obliging . . . listeners to give a sign, however begrudging and however mean, that [s]/he is qualified to speak" (p. 33).

Performance

The idea of asserting presence through contributing and telling new stories leads us to the idea of performance. Performance works, as the Goffman quote above indicates, by insisting that authoritative presence be acknowledged. When people pay attention to performance, it can be restorative, to pick up Grande's usage from the chapter's opening epigram. It can work toward a restoration of self-determination or the *enactment*—Brayboy et al. (2012) would say "engagement" or "operationalization" (p. 17)—of sovereignty. When I use the term

performance, I follow Richard Bauman (1978) and Dell Hymes (1981), who designate performance as a social event or practice wherein certain individuals publically demonstrate (through communication or art) high degrees of competency in socially recognized forms or forums. For Bauman and Hymes, performances occur or are constructed in response to particular social and historical contexts. Performance includes both individual elements unique to performers, places, and times, as well as more generally accepted and expected social forms of expression as defined for particular performance genres or venues.

As it relates to the project at hand, the entire educational experience can be considered a performance. A good student (performer) comes into the classroom (venue) early (time), sits in the front row of desks (place), raises her hand, looks the teacher (audience) in the eye, and answers questions clearly, concisely, and correctly (socially acceptable forms of expression). As an example of how performance figures in one instance of the study, I refer you back to Dana's posture in the scenario from Interchapter 1. She sits with her head down in her hands, her hair covering her face and eyes, her knees crossed, and her foot tapping. She cloaks or masks her presence by drawing her body tightly inward and down. In this instantiation, she is performing withdrawal and impatience—communicating a desire to be elsewhere—for an audience of authority figures. Her audience, however, silently but deliberately dismisses her performative action, which causes increased tension. Performative presence/absence in the interchapter scenario fairly calls out for reflective commentary on the scene as well as the social context in which it occurs. More will be said about this in a later chapter.

When speaking of performance, I also find Andrew Cowell's (2002) work with the Northern Arapaho useful. Cowell analyzes interactional dialogues put together in a booklet form for the purpose of teaching the Arapaho language in a bilingual curriculum. Cowell's idea of performance includes events, practices, or rituals intended to demonstrate competency in a

socially recognized form, time, activity, and/or space. To Cowell, performance means an expected response using generally acceptable conventions that are "defined for the particular performance genre" or venue (p. 4). In his research, these conventions include the four key Arapaho values of bravery, generosity, listening, and adaptation (p. 9). Performing any one of these values might constitute a specific, conventional, acceptable performance in a given, particular context. In another context, however, the convention could call forth an opposite judgment. It could signal that which is considered incompetent, unexpected, and unacceptable. Evidenced by the tension it caused, Dana's posture in Interchapter 1 was an instantiation of unacceptable performance. Given the immediate context, it was equivalent to other unacceptable student performances in Interchapter 1, such as bringing a child into the classroom. Both performances in this case were deemed incompetent, unexpected, and unacceptable. Another similar performance, as suggested by a participant, was when Native students "being very tired, maybe, from doing something the night before" came to class but then "just cover[ed] themselves all up and sle[pt] in a corner."

As Bauman (1978), Hymes (1981), and Cowell (2002) indicate, performance is about negotiating what is competent, expected, and acceptable. Negotiation, as Cowell suggests, serves "to establish, reinforce, open to questioning, criticize, or redefine social practices and modes of thought" (p. 4). Two additional performances from Interchapter 1 serve to criticize and open to questioning the mandatory supplementary instruction. In the first, Connie keeps her book bag closed and on the floor; in the second, Lillian keeps her coat on. In these performances, we see students negotiate the element of control/command exerted through the sessions' mandatory designation. They are present, although their performances suggest they would rather be elsewhere. They are only staying as long as they must, and that is not long enough for it to be

worth the trouble of pulling out study materials, settling in, getting comfortable, or getting ready to work.

Performance also becomes a unit of analysis when it is viewed as per Ryan Claycomb's (2008) cataloguing for critical writing pedagogy. His catalogue of eight basic analytic terms includes metric, action, audience-centeredness, theater, embodiment, ritual, role, and uncertainty. Each term emphasizes a type of interactive dialogue that details ways in which students and teachers are constrained by specific social and historic relations. The terms adjust or direct learning situations toward action and "socially resistant praxis." I introduce and summarize these terms here, underlining each one. Metric, for example, is often synonymous with rubric systems of grading and becomes, by extension, a way to discipline actions both academically and socially. Action suggests movement and the kind of doing that is "always in rehearsal" (a practice, preparation, or trial-run) and that is often contested. Actions can erase presence as easily as they can construct it.

As described above, Dana, Connie, and Lillian's actions could be considered audience-centered performances, as they indicate an awareness of immediate audience and context. They could also be thought of in terms of theater because they indicate ability to utilize expressive modes along with in-your-face "guerilla" tactics. Other participant performances not detailed here have, at times, moved explicitly—and sometimes explosively—into anger ("excess, or surplus"). Participants have at times performed powerful enactments of presence through speeches, poetry, and strongly worded letters. These participant performances show they were beginning to think about "defining, assembling and mobilizing" strategies and tactics for new (un)sympathetic audiences, whether faculty, administrators, peers, or my colleagues and me. As participants' "corporeal" (physical) and "ideological" (political) performances played out, they became "critical" in that they opened to questioning a curriculum or pedagogy of domination

and control. They disrupted the "ritualistic potential of schooling" by insisting that what was happening to them mattered and they wanted a say in that matter. They had a sense that their actions could positively "transform" events, even if their actions took the form of negatively (un)mask(ing) themselves or others. They deliberately crafted a "risky ethos" although they knew that ethos had uncertain consequences. "Disguises are necessary," Womack (1999) tells us, when negotiating with someone who has "more power" (p. 152).

By attending to the ways presence/absence and doing/being are performed, we can begin to understand participant intercultural exchanges on a much deeper level. Doing is performative (inter)action. Performance "heighten[s] the immediacy, relevancy, and depth" of the interaction (Cowell, p. 7). This is especially so when the performance is meant to mark difference and when it occurs between participants of unequal authority or status. Performance is further heightened by the uncertainty principle (Claycomb, 2008) in that it is "elusive, oppositional" and "resistant to discursive control." We cannot, in other words, "censor that which has already happened; what we discipline when we discipline performance is only ever a trace of that performance." Performance thus has radical potential and can be successfully studied and employed to understand participant interactional tensions. In all these ways, the concept of performance becomes particularly useful to this research.

Layered Overlap

Presence and performance can be identified as distinct from one another; but, as you can see from the examples of Dana, Connie, and Lillian, they can also be seen to overlap. Overlap in presence and performance will be further illustrated in Interchapter 4, where participants rival an exchange I label "The Eye Rollers." The exchange illustrates ways presence and performance intersect in terms of, for example, what Natives and non-Natives do in classroom venues, specifically why and where non-Natives propose Native students should sit and where they

actually do sit in classroom contexts, as well as how Native students' being/ideas (presence) are and are not silenced in those classroom contexts.

Overlap is illustrated in an additional instance by looking at the ways AITE students' presence and performance was received when they participated in a yearly powwow, with its accompanying Navajo taco/fry bread fundraisers. To explain, AITE students worked alongside those belonging to other American Indian organizations such as the Intertribal Student Association (ITSA) and American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) to sell fry bread tacos and fund the powwow. Their presence and help was expected as part of Native responsibility on campus. AITE students demonstrated heightened presence in this context because some were elected as organizational officers, and they helped to organize and conduct both the fundraisers and the powwow. Performance in relation to fundraisers and the powwow was deliberately enacted to assert presence: this is who we (Natives) are; this is what we do; this is how we maintain community loyalty; and this is how through the ritual and ceremony of powwow we celebrate tribal status, heritage, and history.

Depending on levels of support and funding—whether, for instance, they received Cultural Awareness grants or whether other minority organizations on campus or the Office of Diversity agreed to help fund the event—these powwow performances signified the degree to which Natives were a part of the academic and/or local Native community. They signified as well the degree to which they were considered separate or absent. Reception and enactments of Native presence and performance in these instances were influenced by ongoing debates about the necessity and or degrees of cultural integration and separation necessary to succeed academically. Although authoritative rhetoric concerning the powwow asserted, "We fully support you as an American Indian group," some faculty complained when AITE students spent too much time and effort on the powwow "to the detriment of their studies." They complained,

for example, when students had difficulty completing assignments on time during the time the powwow event was occurring and asked for deadline extensions. Dealing with these complaints was difficult for students both psychologically and academically. One even chose to forgo her graduation ceremony because she had been told she was not to miss any more hours at her student teaching site, hours she had missed (and received permission to do so) to contribute to the powwow. She was then chastised for not attending the ceremony.

Some students also experienced material difficulty because of their performance in the powwow event. Organizations that had agreed to help with funding reneged or were slow to come through. This presented a hardship for those students who paid the expenses involved in ordering tee shirts 'out of pocket' and then waited and hoped to be reimbursed months later. For Native participants in this study, then, their enactments of presence and performance garnered contradictory responses. Students were praised by non-Native faculty for their involvement but were also criticized [disciplined] for their involvement. Participants' presences and performances were therefore contested, and they most certainly had to be rhetorically negotiated given shared but differently constructed histories, statuses, goals, educational purposes, and epistemologies (Cajete, 2005; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002).

Colonization and Deficit

Building on preceding foundational ideas of presence and performance, I now turn to a discussion of colonization with its simulations and resultant erasures of Indigenous thought and tradition from academic contexts. Such an erasure provides exigence, as Karl Kroeber (2008) suggests, for counter imaginings, or the "processes of imaginative reconstitution" by which Native presence is (re)asserted in this dissertation (p. 29). Instances of contestation and erasure compel Natives to re(counter)imagine themselves and their roles and work to de-center deficit

constructions of Indigenous intellectual presence and traditions (see also Kaomea, 2003, 2005). Attempts at erasure call upon, as James Cox (2006) mentions, Vizenor's sovereign space of imagination, which allows Natives to "maintain a world beyond . . . where both Indians and non-Indians can reimagine, and therefore begin to remake, the colonial world" (p. 10).

In spite of community members' and critical studies scholars' diligent efforts to counteract it, however, too much rhetoric surrounding Indigenous populations in academic settings continues a litany of non presence and non performance: absence, failure, and hopelessness. These deficit and defeatist representations are more often than not accompanied by accusations that suggest Natives aren't performing. As in the case of the powwow, it is suggested their loyalties are divided. They aren't trying hard enough. They need to work harder. When Native students respond to these exhortations, when they speak up about their difficulties or speak back to authoritative pressure, they are given the impression (or in some cases are explicitly told) that they should just pull themselves up by their bootstraps[12] and get with the program.

Bootstrap rhetoric implies complaint concerning (in)ability to fit in and being treated "like everyone else," (everybody has troubles, so what makes your problem so special/different?) both of which rely on contrasting the presence and performance of dominant populations with negative "Indian" simulations and erasures, the generalized/essentialized assumptions about who Native students are and what they should or should not be doing. The rhetoric implies that if they would just deny their experiences and histories (one could say deny their very selves and backgrounds) and become fully integrated into the academic community (act like everyone else), they would see success. Rhetorically, these discourses ignore the "complete failure . . . of the

[12] Victor Villanueva (1993) discusses the contradictions inherent in American academic assimilation rhetorics.

claims of assimilation ideology" that promise access to the power held within dominant culture as well as material and educational success (Womack, 1999, p. 38). As one student participant told me in a mixture of tears and laughter, "I have tugged on these bootstraps. I have yanked them and stitched them and stapled them. Hell, I've even duct taped them! It doesn't make any difference!"

Contemporary bootstrap rhetoric elides the fact that before allotment, before statehood, early-contact nations had greater presence and greater performance as literate communities than they do now. They were often "more educated than their white neighbors." They had their own school systems, created newspapers and other documents, and had been effectively and efficiently self-governing for at least hundreds, possibly thousands of years (Womack, 1999, p. 39; see also Weaver, Womack, & Warrior, 2006, p. xix). Many scholars—and not only Indigenous ones—have made these arguments. Osage scholar Robert Allen Warrior (1995), for example, notes a legacy of Indigenous intellectual tradition beginning in the 1700s and continuing through the 1990s (pp. 3-43). Cherokee/German rhetorician Angela Haas' (2007) research into the communicative force of wampum belts persuades readers that Indigenous intellectualism has existed among North American communities for at least a thousand years and provides a foundation for present-day Indigenous digital rhetorics (p. 77). More recently, Ellen Cushman's (2011) research into Cherokee writing systems and syllabary demonstrates these were not based on the EuroWestern alphabet. Rather, they were based on Cherokee syllables and meanings. Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa McCarty (2006) address the often-negative metaphysical and material consequences of current educational policy and how the academy has historically figured in the lives of Native students (see also Deyhle, 1995; Francis & Reyhner, 2002; Meriam, 1928; Reyhner & Eder, 2004). Cherokee/Dine' scholar Brian Yazzie Burkhart (2004) explores how Indigenous epistemologies articulate ways of knowing or coming to know

that are rooted in cultural or community contexts (see also Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Battiste, 2002; Deloria, 2001; Meyer, 2001a, 2001b), but pointedly discusses how EuroWestern knowledge systems disregard these.

Because Indigenous knowledge systems are largely disregarded, it is unlikely that early intellectual Indigenous traditions will be connected to contemporary reality in public debate. If a person knows about these early intellectual traditions and their contested reality, it is most likely because of personal history or a scholarly interest in Indigenous literacy issues, not because it is widespread knowledge. As the literatures just mentioned and many other literatures indicate, reconstructions rooted in Indigenous epistemologies work to relocate histories of intellectual traditions (see also Tyeeme Clark in Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004), yet colonizers and generations of their descendants refuse to see evidence (presence and performance) of the "other's" complex culture and intelligence. This, exacerbated by a boarding school mentality of "kill the Indian in him, and save the man,"[13] which continues today in the push toward assimilation, has in many respects negated (obliterated) Indigenous educational and political histories from much public rhetoric.

Indigenous Studies scholars, Native and non-Native alike, agree that counteracting deficit and defeatist rhetoric involves confronting the "historical imbalances" caused by colonization (Marker, 2004, p. 20). As noted, these imbalances have at best marginalized Indigeneity and at worse erased it from academic contexts altogether. To resist this marginalization and erasure, scholars both early and late have plied cultural and historical

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[13] Retrieved from http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4929/ March 14, 2011. Official report of the nineteenth annual conference of charities and correction (1892), 46-59. Reprinted in Richard H. Pratt, "The advantages of mingling Indians with Whites," in *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian"* 1880-1900 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1973), 260-271.

knowledge and memory to reconstruct history and reestablish an Indigenous intellectual presence in the academy.[14] Rather than focusing on deficit and defeat, they focus on power, possibility, and hope. Hope, in this sense, is not "the future-centered hope of the Western imagination, but rather, a hope that lives in contingency with the past, one that trusts the beliefs and understandings of [Native] ancestors as well as the power of traditional knowledge" (Grande, 2004, p. 28). It is a hope that "believes in the strength and resiliency of indigenous peoples and communities, recognizing that their struggles are not about inclusion and enfranchisement . . . but, rather, are part of the indigenous project of sovereignty and indigenization" (pp. 28-29; see also Kanaʻiaupuni, 2004).

Given the history of colonization, not only does dominant culture enact contradictory stances about Native presence and performance, as the powwow performances and bootstrap rhetoric indicates, but Indigenous culture sometimes does as well. Indigenous individuals and communities engage in vigorous debates about how to continue and expand contemporary intellectual traditions alongside long-standing traditions and epistemologies. When Warrior (1995) summarizes various American Indian intellectual movements across time, he reports a "conflictual diversity" so pronounced that negotiation seems nearly impossible to effect (p. 34). On the one hand stand scholars and community activists concerned with identifying and detailing the intellectual and/or academic moves of an ostensibly unified (one body with one purpose) but separatist (set apart from AngloAmerican society) Nation and/or People. On the other hand stand more skeptical scholars and community members, theorists deeply wary of an approach that appears much too generalized to be useful, does not account for intercultural influence, and borders on a detrimental essentialism. What we see, then, are widely varying

[14] Although Kaomea's (2003) reading of erasure due to colonialism focuses on Native Hawaiian school systems, it has applicability in American Indian educational contexts as well.

theoretical positions concerning degrees of integration and separation in both contemporary and historical contexts. Because different scholarly camps understand the "how-to" of re-centering differently, I now turn to unpacking and complicating prominent debates of the past few decades concerning integration and separation, particularly emphasizing what I see as their parallel counterparts: survivance and rhetorical sovereignty.

Complications of Integration and Separation

Some scholars argue that separation in any sense of the word is impossible. To their way of thinking, an assumption of a unified People with essential shared characteristics invalidates the ways individuals within identifiable groups such as tribal nations experience plural identities and participate in multiple communities. How, they puzzle, can a "one body" stance adequately address the nuanced life experiences of "mixed bloods," (Lyons, 1998), "cross-bloods" (Vizenor, 1991), or transgendered folks, for example? Similar concerns are raised about the difficulties of describing or theorizing the experiences of those Natives who identify as queer (see Driskill, Finley, Gilley & Morgensen, 2011). And what about the difficulty of establishing a separatist solidarity when histories are so intertwined, so integrated, across generations? Even Womack (1999) in his insistence on cultural resistance that promotes separation notes that because of Creek matrilineal traditions, Whiteness was "often subsumed, or at the very least modified by Creekness" through intermarriage (p. 144). Thus, separation—at least that based on authenticity debates and essentialism—is understood as reductive and limiting. It has inadequate explanatory power.

Philip Deloria (1998) appears to align with an integrationist stance in his book *Playing Indian*, wherein he emphasizes a fluid type of integration. He suggests that radical separation is a misnomer, an inaccurate and unsustainable interpretation. When we consider AngloAmerican and American Indian history, he says, we must conclude, "the two stories are inseparable" (p.

191) because as Whites and American Indians "exchange[d] and share[d] cultural material" (p. 172) they jointly created an "ambiguous hybrid terrain" (p. 152). He reasons that, "The power to define and exclude, the power to appropriate and co-opt, the power to speak and resist, and the power to build new, hybrid worlds are sometimes one and the same, and that power flows through interlocked social and cultural systems" (p. 178). Mary Hermes and Chad Uran (2006) also suggest that separation is blurred in contemporary contexts because, as they argue, who can say when or whether "strategic employment of 'tradition' as a means of coping with change . . . issues from an indigenous voice or a nonindigenous one" (p. 395).

Fixing or containing Indigenous knowledge as something that belongs in the past forestalls movement toward increasing possibilities. Mary Hermes (2005) goes so far as to suggest that the "greatest error in Indian education" occurs under these circumstances (p. 48). In this case, she says, "[l]esson plans, subject areas, and course content all attempt to act as containers" instead of transformers, and they fix Indigenous cultural knowledge as static and of the past, thereby effectively erasing it as a contemporary reality (p. 44). By the same token, attempts to simply add Indigenous culture onto the template of EuroWestern structures, Hermes asserts, "distort[s] and diminish[es]" its power (p. 49). In these ways, Hermes seems to suggest that integration—whether identified in theory, practice, or product—is still colored by separatist notions, especially as these emerge in interactions between institutional and Indigenous stakeholders. Even when institutions create and implement culturally relevant curricula, for example, they are in most cases symptomatic of an "*uneasy* alliance" (Deloria, 1998, p. 191, emphasis added) because asymmetrical power relationships are still maintained. Hermes thus acknowledges the need for making the old seem new and for separation if Natives are to experience more power. Insofar as stances embrace hybridity and integration they can replace (swallow up) "truth" and "history" as understood by Native populations (Womack, 1999, p. 3).

Beverly Klug and Patricia Whitfield (2003) promote a form of separation when they suggest that, ideally, Native students benefit from instruction given by those who understand their lived experiences both culturally and linguistically, i.e., by Native educators. Indigenous education scholars Malia Villegas (Alutiq/Sugpiaq), Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy (Lumbee), and Angelina Castagno (2007) point this out as well. They argue that Pima students, for instance, require "Pima educators, a guiding knowledge system based in Pima values, a Pima community commitment for education, and a Pima social system with economic, ecological, health and other elements required to support a healthy educational system" (slide 7). Villegas, Brayboy, and Castagno also, however, argue that culturally relevant schooling can be misused and misunderstood. Rather than making culture the foundation of learning, it can be perceived as "something to be repaired, linked, or mined for resources." Under these circumstances, it "others" students and ignores relationships. It erases the contextual understandings needed to acquire knowledge. Students, families, and communities become secondary concerns and their cultures seen as obstacles to learning rather than resources.

It is a complex dilemma. Even when Native students benefit from culturally relevant schooling, they are still primarily taught by AngloAmerican English-speakers who are required to administer heavily regulated federal policies and follow institutionally governed curriculums based on a very different set of cultural norms. This was true for AITE students, as we will see in a later chapter, and it is true in other university systems. The difficulty holds for tribal schools as well. This means that even when institutions attempt to initiate curricula with a Native cultural orientation, these often undergo an institutional transformation, and not in an empowering sense for Native peoples. Curriculums delivered via English as the template of instruction—however unwittingly—carry a EuroWestern angle of vision by means of institutional and linguistic structures.

Lyons (2010), too, complicates the integration and separation divide. He introduces a new term, x-mark, which is taken from the presence/absence of Native identity in the performance of signature or the signing of documents, often treaty documents. Lyons' x-mark signifies presence and performs agreement, although it is the type of agreement "one makes when there seems to be little choice in the matter" (p. 1). An x-mark indicates "a decision one makes when something has already been decided for you, but it is still a decision," and it "symbolize[s] Native assent to things (concepts, policies, technologies, ideas) that, while not necessarily traditional in origin, can sometimes turn out all right and occasionally even good" (p. 3). An x-mark is an adaptation or accommodation made for survival. Beyond survival, however, the assent of the x-mark values movement and return. Specifically, it values migration, an axiology/epistemology that accepts the need to shift or journey as seasons and situations demand. This valuation is based upon a "guiding vision" of the Great Migration and is imbued with, Lyons (2010) notes, "something we might call the 'spirit of a people'" (p. 5). X-marks, Lyons says, are "commitments to living a new way of life, not only in the immediate present but 'for as long as the grass grows and the rivers flow'" (p. 8).

Using this term, then, Lyons (2010) takes exception to what he sees as pronouncements concerning the primacy of traditionalism (a concept he associates with separation) in a contemporary context because these types of pronouncements can encourage racist simulations and can mean internalizing "removal" and seeing a return to "pure traditionalism" as the only way to escape a "corrupt" White society and prevent loss of culture and identity (p. 10). He opposes this way of thinking and says, "the x-mark is never made out of fear of corruption. It simply works with what we have in order to produce something good. X-marks are made with a view of the new as merely another stopping point in a migration that is always heading for home, always keeping time on the move" (p. 10). I see the integration/separation debate

embedded in Lyons' notion of x-marks as related to hybridic transmotion, which Vizenor (1998) describes as "a sense of native motion and an active presence" (p. 15; see also 2009, pp. 108, 162). The key point is doing—as opposed to having or being—because motion or action brings more abundance, more possibilities. If Native populations focus on doing culture in the present rather than on having a culture of the past or being a culture (still implying fixedness), then there is movement and momentum that allows people to survive/live and, more importantly, to thrive, to *find home*.

Even as Lyons makes a good case for integration, however, his emphasis on "the spirit of *a people*" (emphasis added) and "home" seems to indicate at least some acknowledgement of separation. But rather than nostalgically longing for an earlier, better time, his idea of separation would have American Indians draw on tradition for the purpose of engaging in meaningful actions that bring about "more life" today (pp. 84, 86). The notions of x-marks and transmotion do not, then, discount history or tradition. They do suggest it is not productive for contemporary Natives to dwell in the pain and loss of victimry. Nor should Natives employ surveillance in the form of "culture cops" who would punish those who wish to shift tradition and move in new directions (pp. 73-109). X-marks are made as a commitment to action, a doing for more life and they have a practical purpose: to assist community-determination now and in the future.

Survivance

The ideas of x-marks and transmotion allow us to see the ambiguity inherent in integration/separation stances, particularly as they are connected to *survivance*, an understanding of which is critical to a more complete understanding of the entire dissertation project. I use the term as Powell (2004) does, and she follows Vizenor's (1994) introduction of it in *Manifest Manners*. According to Powell's (2002) early archival research, survivance can be identified as a

type of doing, including moves made both knowingly and not. Vizenor (1999) calls them moves of "narrative chance" (p. 82) or "invention" (p. 85). Vizenor further describes survivance as an active "resistance" (2008, p. 11) that performs "new stories of tribal courage" (1999, p. 4). Survivance utilizes Native perspectives and includes actions performed within contested cultural spaces where Natives are at political and cultural disadvantage. Survivance in this sense describes a combination of Indigenous survival and resistance strategies applied for the purpose of countering colonization, the "surveillance and literature of dominance" (1999, p. 5). But survivance is something more than the potentially dangerous, precipitous act of (metaphorically) hanging on by the skin of your teeth, i.e., surviving. It also indicates more than the fixed state implied by the (also metaphorical) digging in of your heels, i.e., resisting. It encompasses more than happenstance or response.

Vizenor (1999) conceptualizes survivance as a "natural presence" like that of the wind or rivers or animals. It is ever-present and variable, "always in motion" (p. 38) and always linked to or moving across some thing or some other. "Native stories of survivance" are the very "creases of transmotion" (Vizenor, 1998, p. 15). Acts of survivance work within the small fissures or cracks of history to ensure a future possibility. For Native peoples, survivance indicates creativity and an openness to change via Indigenous rhetoric (see Stromberg, 2006, p. 1). Indigenous rhetors, in other words, have to be cognizant of those creases of opportunity to be able to act, to take advantage of opportunity or chance. Indigenous rhetors have to understand the underlying principles involved in creation of multiple kinds (i.e. jokes, speeches, documents) to be able to invent response. When Native people story or interpret their contemporary acts of survivance (survival and/or resistance), the stories become connected, linked to, or crossed with the folds of history.

Here, let me interject one student participant's illustration of transmotion, her description of how she enacts survivance while participating in EuroWestern educational processes. "In terms of going along with the flow of school," she says, "I know what I have to do in order to get done with the program. I do what I have to do." Furthermore, she notes, she can adapt, accommodate, and still maintain tribal affiliation in the service of self-determination. She says, "I've played in the White man's world" and "I've had to [hold a professional position while] going off to Washington, DC to represent my tribe at the federal level." Survivance strategies in this student's case are linked to the verbal (and, I would suggest, textual and lived) "wrangling" or negotiation all Native students do to survive (Gubele, 2008). Through working the creases of opportunity, she can hold her own in the White world and at the same time fulfill a needed role in her community. Her survivance is skillfully crafted individual performance combined with historic understanding.

Powell's (2002) research allows us to see additional, concrete qualities and/or modes of survivance, where, historically, Indigenous rhetors seized opportunity in order to invent and/or create rhetorical spaces for Indigenous presence and performance. Powell documents and explains, for example, Charles Alexander Eastman and Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins' use of dominant discourse in written form and in public performances or lectures to show the ways it afforded them the opportunity of public presence or visibility. To summarize, Eastman and Winnemucca Hopkins along with other Indigenous rhetors of the time strategically considered the contexts confronting them and acted accordingly. Given the situations they encountered, they appealed to their mostly AngloAmerican audiences' beliefs and values with fluency and acumen. They evoked pathos and, consequently, persuaded many people in their audiences. They utilized the vocabulary of Christianity. They appealed to commonly held notions of gender. If criticism was directed their way, they adeptly redirected it. They encouraged cultural

mediation. Finally, they played to non-Native people's ideals of their own goodness. (p. 407) They worked the creases available to them when the chance or opportunity presented itself.

Brayboy's (2005a) ethnographic research also provides examples of survivance. It details how "John" and "Heather," contemporary American Indian students, negotiate constructions of presence and performance in university environments. Brayboy shows the ways John and Heather utilize Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and valuing to invent and create, to navigate the creases of educational scenarios in rhetorically savvy ways. In Brayboy's (2005a) case studies, John worked hard to develop "outside the classroom" relationships with his university professors through office hour visits and independent study courses. He increased his debate and oratorical skills in classroom settings by connecting them to the "intensity [and] confrontation" learned and developed in Native competitions (p. 200). This active participation in classroom discussions, while not typical of everyday habit, became a sport or game, and because his instructors encouraged it he performed the role of, as he says, "a good arguer, man" (p. 200). Heather exhibited a very different set of navigational strategies based on the tribal norms to which she was accustomed. In class, instead of drawing attention to her knowledge by making definitive statements or points, she learned how to ask clarifying questions in ways that were both academically appreciated and culturally appropriate. Out of class, she took advantage of one-to-one verbal interactions with professors, taking time to ask questions and further develop ideas raised in readings.

Eastman, Winnemucca, Jon, and Heather were certainly visible in their respective public and academic spheres. Their examples help us understand how individual American Indians have been able to take advantage of possibilities to enact what their respective researchers have termed survivance and, consequently, establish more broadly understood competencies in regards to American Indian peoples. Survivance does not, then, deny the material realities of

Native lives; rather, it is a trickster move that counteracts victimry and wields presence and performance like wizardry, even though the performances/enactments may not all be interpreted as having the same measure of success. It bears pointing out that the acceptance rhetors and students received by utilizing these survivance strategies was only to the degree that they—people and strategies—could be identified as "fitting in" to conventionalized EuroWestern public and academic society. Whether these individual actions pushed boundaries for American Indians as a collective is debatable, and this indicates a need for encouraging more deliberate performance, more deliberate action/activism in public and academic realms.

Nationhood Complications in Integration and Separation

Discrepant stances concerning degrees of integration and separation are made more understandable when we consider historical contexts as related to the "complex, dynamic state of evolving nationhood" (Womack, 1999, p. 139). To this end, Lyons (2010) teases out a useful distinction between nationality and nationhood, and does so based on linguistic etymologies (Latin, French, and Ojibwemowin). The origin of the word nation comes from Latin *natio* and *natura* indicating a function of birth, nature, race, or breed. According to Lyons' research, the word has been used in English since the thirteenth century but by the seventeenth century was understood as having more a political referent than a racialized one. There is, however, no Native linguistic referent to the term "nation." There is no corollary, at least not in the Ojibwemowin language. This indicates that the tribal people living on the American continent before '1492' would probably not have understood themselves as nations. Political scholars suggest that nations as we know them are a modern development "whose logic cannot be discovered prior to the modern era" and are connected to "industrialization, mass literacy, public education, and other such modern developments" (p. 115). Modernity therefore "encouraged the modern nation and state to emerge" (p. 118). What Lyons' research suggests is that neither

Natives nor European settlers in the Americas were understood as separate nations until modern political concerns brought about the need for the concept. Then, when the need arose, the various groups began acting upon it by "treating" to establish their legitimacy as collective units. "For what is a treaty if not a legal contract between nations?" (p. 123).

If the idea of a nation is distinctly modern, the question becomes whether it is really a useful concept for Native peoples to be taking up in service of maintaining separation based on traditionalism (Lyons, 2010, p. 116, 117). A more plausible claim, Lyons suggests, might arise based on "an 'unbroken' descent" from an ethnic and cultural genealogy (p. 121). Beyond denoting nationality (political or legal status), claims of nationhood are then more about "the character and integrity of one's cultural identity" (Cohen cited in Lyons, 2010, p. 113). Hence, says Lyons, "The idea of an Indian nation may [only] be as modern as anyone else's nation, but that doesn't mean its origins aren't as old as the hills" (p. 121). Tracing the etymology of nationhood, Lyons suggests, shifts Native thought away from ideas of being separate by function of nationality (conglomerate groupings based on political geography) toward ideas of separation based on "ethnie" (groupings based on ethnic and cultural commonality). This remediation of nationhood has produced "a paradigm shift" that increasingly emphasizes tradition in a way that is "separatist" (p. 113), yes, but not in terms of a rigid return to tradition or "the old ways." Rather, it is a separation in terms of cultural resistance to assimilation and in terms of Native community solidarity in contemporary politics (pp. 119-122).

Womack's (1999) idea of separatism is bolder and stronger than that proposed by Lyons, but it too relies on ethnie and cultural resistance to produce a sense of People or nationhood. In *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*, Womack makes an argument for resisting colonialism and asserting a Native cultural canon as distinct and separate from an "American" one. "To exist as a nation," Womack says, "the community needs a perception of nationhood,

that is, stories . . . that help them imagine who they are as a people, how they came to be, and what cultural values they wish to preserve" (p. 26). Native culture, after all, predates American culture. Like Cheryl Savageau, whom he quotes, Womack believes history cannot be understood and portrayed as merely a variety of equal positions from which one can arbitrarily choose. This is impossible, he contends, because for Indigenous peoples most recorded historical perspectives are actually compilations of "distortions and lies" (p. 3) that benefit dominating cultures at tribal expense. As he points out, it seems no coincidence that

> just now, when [Natives] are starting to tell [their] stories, that suddenly there is no truth. It's a big cop out . . . a real political move by the mainstream to protect itself from the stories Native people . . . are telling. If everybody's story is all of a sudden equally true, then there is no guilt, no accountability, no need to change anything, no need for reparations, no arguments for sovereign nation status, and [mainstream] positions of power are maintained. (pp. 3-4)

The idea of truth as understood in a EuroWestern sense is problematized here as an oppositional and privileged binary to story: EuroWesterners think they have truth; Natives only have stories. If Natives story their claims as true, then truth must be relative, relieving colonial aggressors from responsibility and allowing them to retain their narratives and their positions of power. Because "the separation of Truth from Story is a key component of Eurowestern [sic] colonialism" that "often encourages violence" (Cox, 2006, p. 252), it becomes imperative that not all perspectives be recognized as having equal and/or relative value. Rather, the way Native and EuroWestern history has been and still is positioned demands acknowledging a strategic separation between Natives and others based on an Indigenous ethnie, a commonality of cultural and historical experience that affords communities distinct political and educational rights.

These arguments convincingly suggest separatist positions are essential to Native survival. Like other scholarship that wants to insure "White does not always swallow up Red," they argue for the necessity of this type of separation as a means of cultural and educational resistance. These arguments suggest that maintaining distinct Native identities is imperative to all

aspects of *ethnie* or ethnic survival.[15] Through cultural resistance, they recognize Indigenous traits of creativity, innovation, and adaptability as they occurred in early intellectual traditions and argue for their continuance in academic practice today.

As relating to AITE, integrationist/separatist debates played out much as they have done elsewhere, as a tug of war. Integration into university systems and structures was encouraged even as AITE was, as suggested earlier, "spatially segregated," with offices and meeting rooms "a long way up the hill from the rest of the College of Education." Students attended integrated classrooms and courses, but studied together, separate from their larger academic community; and, as noted in Interchapter 1, they also experienced at least some instruction to address their specific and separate needs. Additionally, they received group and individual mentoring within separate AITE spaces and conducted study sessions together in their apartments, sharing lecture notes and instructional PowerPoint slides when necessary. Students did not spend a lot of time on campus, at the library, or in the student center, "and they didn't want to," says a participant, because "the University as a whole felt like a hostile place. They didn't feel they could be themselves." Hence, they were often socially separate. They went sightseeing as a group, or as parts of the group. Together, they went to movies, barbeques, parties, celebrations, and socials at the American Indian Resource Center. AITE was even recognized as a separate entity at scholarship banquets, award recognition banquets, and graduation ceremonies. Although each participant's tribal affiliation was honored and recognized, the program formed its own community based not on the idea of separate tribal nations but on a Native sense of historic and

[15] One participant's line of reasoning follows the literature: "We started talking about what we want to call ourselves or how we identify ourselves culturally. And there was definite, very strong sentiment among all the students about the different tribes and where they're from and what it means. A very strong sense of that, of defining themselves that way."

cultural commonality (ethnie) and solidarity. The program subsequently enacted a measure of separation from the larger university community.

Enacting separation as an AITE community correlates with its assertion of self-determination through self-education. As one example, students participated in a course designed specifically to be inclusive of Indigenous epistemologies and texts. The course spoke to the benefit students would experience through enacting some cultural and educational separation from "the traditional [EuroWestern] way of learning." One participant suggested the course provided a space where "the walls . . . came down to a certain degree" and "there weren't as many filters." The class was characterized as discussion based ("personal things, course material, topics, and all of that") with "lots of involvement from everybody" and "very engaging." The participant continued, "It was the first time I felt I belonged in some way . . . like people would listen to me in a different way than in most classrooms, and it was just kind of, I don't know, . . . it was a powerful experience." Another student in the course said,

> It just blew my mind. . . . I had never known that there were so many bright, intelligent, articulate, academic Native Americans. . . . I had no clue that there were so many who had gone before me, that were in this educational practice and were writing and researching and finding—just being smart like that—I had no clue, no idea. . . . [So] I was more me. . . . Just speaking freely. Speaking freely, and saying, raising my hand and saying a thing if I had anything to say. Questioning verbally, not just in my head, not just saying, "I wonder about x," really speaking outward. I never did that in my other classes.

Whether represented as enacting integration or separation, AITE was highly publicized and thus highly visible. It could be argued that, for a time, the tag "AITE" became synonymous with Native presence and "diversity" on campus. This very visibility became a cause for tension because, obviously, AITE covered neither all Native students nor all diversity on campus. Some saw the focus on AITE as privileging one group and further marginalizing others without such a public face. Some resented AITE students "getting tons more support than [others] received." The separation, seen as a beneficial and necessary protection by most involved in the AITE

program, made others uncomfortable. The umbrella department housing the program, for example, suggested that AITE mentors were spending too much time "up there" and were not participating enough in departmental events and seminars. According to one of the mentors,

> The underlying message was [we] were challenging the status quo too much, which is pretty funny because I consider myself, in the realm of all things, a fairly conservative White girl. (Grin). I mean I embody Whiteness fairly substantially, so to think that here I was upsetting the status quo and presenting a challenge was actually kind of funny but also disheartening, because if *I'm* a challenge what does that mean *students* are?

The mentor acknowledges this was a difficult positioning for students. Another said, "I think AITE was nothing if not 'in your face' at the University, and sometimes it's hard to be the public face of that."

> Some students avoided being associated with AITE, I think, because they recognized the way others might see it as a deficit. . . . I came to see that some students viewed that as a strategy, in terms of not having to have such direct conflicts. There were students who were both avoiding allegiance to AITE and to the College of Education. And that left them somewhere sort of stranded in terms of support services and social support and I think emotional support. . . .
>
> By not associating themselves with AITE, I don't mean to suggest that I had any evidence that they didn't associate themselves with other students in the program. There was very much a sense of community among the students as far as I could tell, but in terms of staff at AITE or structures at AITE there were students who avoided us like the plague.

The tension caused by separatist positions is no more pointedly illustrated than with a conversation I participated in about the AITE where possible reasons for its untimely end were discussed. Toward the end of the conversation, an administrator sighed and said, "We should never have let them be separate." The statement has rung in my mind ever since as I have thought about its many implications, not the least of which concerns who has (or believe they have) the power to control how Indigenous students and programs are placed within institutional and departmental structures. In speaking of separation, the administrator meant separate from the education department in terms of geographic location but was certainly aware of it in terms of governance, function, and control of funding as well. The administrator saw

separation as instrumental in the program's demise, perhaps because, in a generous reading, the program and people involved in the program were perceived as more difficult to protect under those circumstances; or, in a more critical reading, they were more difficult to control. Either case originates from an assumption of power residing in majoritarian administrative authority, an assumption that administration/administrators can "let" Indigenous programs be or do some(any)thing.

Conversely, at least until the program became marked for discontinuance, an Indigenous scholar was the person in charge and Indigenous staff members were empowered to make decisions in terms of academic counseling, choice and sequencing of courses, and (importantly) where and how grant monies were spent. The director and staff members reported directly to the federal Office of Indian Education as well as the University's Office of Special Projects to account for these decisions. In learning the ins and outs of decision-making, staff members were being educated in how to organize, manage, and direct a program under the organizing principle of sovereignty. AITE administrators, staff, and students found the measure of separation they experienced in this regard integral to the success of the program precisely because it indicated an Indigenous power already possessed and Indigenous self-determination and control ready and able to be asserted. In a practical sense, it meant more direct relationality between funding and student need. It lessened the levels of bureaucracy students had to manage. Students knew who to go to for assistance and support, trusting their needs would be understood and met in a timely manner. Regardless of how intellectually (un)aware non-Natives were regarding sovereignty issues and debates, they did not seem to recognize how sovereignty was playing out as an issue of separation and control at this localized site. This fact calls into question any policies and practices formed under the direction of supervising AngloAmerican institutions or

administrations without an acute understanding of separation used as a means of asserting Indigenous sovereignty and possibility.

As suggested earlier, some outside or not directly involved with the site rhetorically positioned AITE separateness as "preferential treatment." One participant notes it was "sort of like the elephant in the room." Students wished that professors, especially professors of color, would "quell these rumors" because they heard "White students in class saying, 'Oh, these American Indian students, they get all this free money.'" They wanted the record set straight. They wanted a person in authority to explain trust agreements in relation to federal monies and payback programs such as AITE, but that never happened.

The idea of preferential treatment was sometimes conflated with affirmative action policy and called up volatile reactions in online media forums. This became apparent when local newspapers announced the return of AITE grant funding. The public responded to these articles (often anonymously) by arguing for a colorblind society, insisting that difference, in this case the difference of racialized colonization and the difference of sovereignty, should not be present. Those commenting publically argued that people are "all the same" and no one should be afforded "special treatment." Based on this argument, one commenter suggested returning the funds was a good decision and said the University should "quit taking special educational subsidies and scholarships based on race. Remember these were set up as restitution for past wrong choices by the government long before they [Natives] were born. I think this has gone on long enough, and non [sic] of the living Utes were alive when the past government actions removed them from their lands." Another said,

> I don't buy the whole "Cultural Barrier" thing native americans [sic] keep trying to push. . . . Students from other countries seem to be flourishing at the U. I'm sick of the "poor me" attitude. Yes, you may face some hurdles, but stop complaining about them and deal with it like everyone else seems to be doing. . . . Our tax dollars have been going to tribes for years and no matter how much they get they are never happy, always looking for more ways to get it for doing nothing. ("Cowboy Joe" November 5, 2009)

Public comments conversely made other arguments with equal vehemence based on assumptions of difference, i.e., we do not, cannot, or will not take the time to understand "their" culture, a rhetoric combining all tribal cultures into a single "Indian" culture and disregarding varied tribal, geographic, or demographic cultures or those based on ethnie.

In these cases, White swallowed up Red in public rhetoric when current issues of integration/separation surrounding American Indians were not recognized as integral to U.S. educational history, not ancillary to it. In their comments, most demonstrated lack of knowledge concerning sovereign status of Native people and a misunderstanding of trust agreements. Because the general public did not understand sovereignty, they did not understand why AITE funding through the federal OIE could only come to Native programs and/or students. They did not understand the legalities of monies held in trust as a result of treaty agreements. One Native person understood and responded to Cowboy Joe's comment by encouraging him to become familiar with federal Indian policy.

> You have to know the law before you can make a statement as loaded as yours. . . . American Indians, according to federal policy, are the ONLY group classified as primarily a POLITICAL (not racial) group (only under other very specific circumstances are American Indians also considered as a "racial" group). Under this classification and under a set of federally recognized (i.e., legally protected) policies—the U.S. has agreed to provide certain services to American Indians. One of those promised services is, you guessed it, education. Thus your statement becomes problematic on multiple levels. (JWE, November 5, 2009)

These public accounts regarding integrationist/separatist approaches and debates throw suspicion upon attempts to shift, move, migrate, or transform academic policy and practice based solely on notions of integration. An understanding of these debates as outlined here brings us to Lyons' (2000) notion of *rhetorical sovereignty*, which he defines as "the inherent right and ability of *peoples* to determine their own communicative needs and desires in pursuit [of

sovereignty], to decide for themselves the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse" (pp. 449-450).

Rhetorical Sovereignty

Rhetorical sovereignty goes beyond individual acts of survivance and is quite an ambitious communitist endeavor. One of the ways it may be accomplished is by expanding academic canons and curricula in a radical rethinking of praxis. I define praxis in this context as action "relating theory to practice in a specific context that challenges limiting situations" (Shor, 1996, p. 3). It can also be defined as "critical reflection" upon such action (Moraes, 1996, p. 111). Praxis, as it relates to rhetorical sovereignty means making what we study "relevant to and reflective of actual populations on this land" (Lyons, 2000, p. 465). It means Natives having more deliberative 'say' over Indigenous representation, doing, and being. It requires more infusion of Indigenous "reargument" and "countersentences" into legal/political spheres, and, finally, it means recentering the study of American Indian rhetoric in educational settings to teach, as Lyons suggests, the reasons behind treaties and agreements (p. 463) along with the consequences of the same. For the purposes of this dissertation, enacting rhetorical sovereignty as praxis means Indigenous populations taking direct action concerning how, what, and why they teach, learn, and interact in a university setting.

As precedent, we can look at two examples of rhetorical sovereignty in public discourse that also enters into educational praxis. These include (1) work coming out of the Tribal Law and Government Center and (2) a report from the Indian Nations At Risk Task Force titled "Toward True Native Education: A Treaty of 1992" (Lyons, 2000). Both exemplify rhetorical sovereignty in that they are relevant to and reflective of the concerns of Indigenous populations; both constitute having deliberative say over how those concerns are represented in legal and political spheres through reinterpretations of treaty arguments and sentences. Another example,

more directly applicable to educational settings, can be found in a 2002 session of the American Educational Research Association conference where seven educators, diverse in disciplinary focus and life background, collaborated to write and perform a Readers' Theater production. The purpose or goal of the session was to confront tensions in postsecondary Indigenous education programs (White, Martin, Hays, Senese, Foley, Nuvayouma, & Riley-Taylor, 2002). Yet another example of rhetorical sovereignty resides in the participatory action research project on health and wellness undertaken by Ted Riecken, Frank Conibear, Corrine Michel, John Lyall, Tish Scott, Michele Tanaka, Suzanne Stewart, Janet Riecken, and Teresa Strong-Wilson (2006). This group of instructors and students used digital video to develop students' identities as knowledgeable leaders and researchers within their Native communities. They developed awareness that resulted in literate responses allowing them to explore health-related issues important to them and their communities. Students were taught to question and enact ethical dimensions of research in and for Indigenous communities as they planned, interviewed, wrote, created, and archived their film projects.

In each of these instances, participants' goals, modes, and styles—languages too, if we use a rhetorical sense of the term—can be said to work toward radically expanding praxis and transforming public rhetoric and representation concerning American Indian education. At core, American Indians in these examples enacted separation rather than integration, sovereignty rather than assimilation. While they still implied survival and resistance in the academy, these examples more pronouncedly demonstrated reliance on a solid sense of self in relation to community and home. They demonstrated how rhetorical sovereignty boldly and deliberately increased participation within the public domain rather than enforced a victimized state (Lyons, 2000, p. 425).

Applying the same criteria to Native students in this study, we can see contemporary rhetorical sovereignty as it supported community integrity within the framework of the academy. In one instance, AITE students encountered a sign posted (ironically) in the Heritage Center, a center servicing residential housing, which advertised an upcoming dormitory event reminiscent of *Playing Indian*, an event the organizers called "Cowboys and Indians." Upon discovering the advertisement, AITE students immediately composed and sent a letter of complaint to the residential staff and to administrators responsible for maintaining a welcoming campus environment.

The letter outlines succinctly, clearly, and persuasively students' objections to the proposed "game" and calls for a quick remedy to the situation. It makes readers acknowledge multiple oppressions in direct language intended to make them wince. The anger in such language is apparent and perhaps it crosses a line that shouldn't be crossed. However, by naming oppressions using overtly derogatory terms that often float in the sludge of public discourse, the students' audience is forced to confront a widespread complicity in continuing colonization and racism. The students, drawing on local and symbolic relationships they clearly understood, then, perform a practical and valuable service for their immediate Native community. As a result, the advertisement was quickly pulled and the activity cancelled. A copy of that letter, modified to protect confidentiality, follows:

> To Whom It May Concern:
>
> We would like to bring your attention to an activity happening within one of [Western University's] dormitories that we find to be offensive, derogatory, and racist. There is a sign posted at the Heritage Center front desk advertising an activity called Cowboys and Indians. When asked what Cowboys and Indians was, the individual at the front desk said it was an activity occurring in one of the resident halls. Therefore, we are not sure what exactly this activity entails. We can only assume that this is a game where the players are divided into two groups, thus crating opponents out of the Cowboys and Indians.

> While Cowboys and Indians, like Cops and Robbers, is a children's game played across the country that some adults may have fond memories of playing, we can assure you that as Indigenous individuals residing on this campus it is not a game that we would enjoy playing, nor would we want our fellow students playing. After all, there would never be any activities allowed on any university across the country called Nazis and Jews, Border Patrol and Wetbacks, Masters and Darkies, or even Mormons and Catholics. So the question is this: why would the term Cowboys and Indians be any less offensive, especially at a school where their mascot bears the name of an Indigenous group of people?
>
> It is our hope that the housing and residents staff received some type of cultural sensitivity training as part of their annual orientation. However, it appears that this training may have missed a section on stereotypes and how they are the most covert form of racism that exists today. We hope the lack of this information is an oversight that will be quickly remedied.
>
> If you wish to contact us to discuss this concern any further please feel free to contact us at 000-0000.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Student, Tribal Affiliation
> Address
>
> Student, Tribal Affiliation
> Address

Just as in historical contexts, this recent example demonstrates it is possible to enact rhetorical sovereignty to exert self- and community-determined power even under less than favorable circumstances.

I have previously discussed one encounter during this dissertation project wherein students and instructors struggled with control via presence and performance, namely, the mandatory supplementary instruction classes introduced in Interchapter 1. A second encounter in Interchapter 2 presents enactments of rhetorical sovereignty. If rhetorical sovereignty means various peoples' and communities' abilities to not only decide how their decisions will be put into play but also the goals and purposes they hope to achieve through acting upon those decisions in public and academic settings, then we can see how the aforementioned letter and additional scenarios do or do not fit that description. When successful, rhetorical sovereignty

enactments have the potential to change pedagogical interactions—if not curriculum—and not only for programs like AITE but also for American Indian educational programs in general, thus working in a more visible, performative way toward self-determination and benefit.

The ability to enact national, tribal, or self-determination through rhetorical sovereignty indicates 'know-how' and willingness to implement multiple rhetorical strategies that are then employed so enactments can be perceived and received as appropriate, indeed powerful, within their relative, communitist contexts. Again, there is overlap between survivance and rhetorical sovereignty, but one way I might suggest a difference is to say that survivance connotes subtle, individual action while rhetorical sovereignty connotes overt, communitist action. Powell's (2004) more recent writings, for example, explicate these shades between/within as she finds Winnemucca's modes, styles, and languages of public address migrating through survivance toward the "calculated and negotiated" actions of rhetorical sovereignty with "a specific audience and a specific goal in mind" (p. 69).

Rhetoric in Rhetorical Sovereignty

This dissertation is titled Tensions in Rhetorics of Presence and Performance, and throughout I have used the term "rhetoric" to help me talk about concepts important to this study. As I conclude this chapter, it is therefore important to briefly unpack what rhetoric is typically taken to mean in academic contexts and how it becomes relevant to the proposed project, including why I insist on the term's plurality in my choice of title. Academics today tend to understand rhetoric as Greek in origin, "a structured system of teaching public speaking and written composition" (Kennedy cited in Stromberg, 2006, p. 2; see also Quintilian). Kenneth Burke (1966), however, understands rhetoric in a broader, more encompassing sense, and, I suggest, in a way that is more in line with an Indigenous epistemic experience. Burke speaks of rhetoric as the symbolic actions in which all human beings participate, those actions involved in

"symbol-using, symbol-making, and symbol-misusing" (p. 6; see also Kress 2000, 2003; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

From this perspective, rhetoric could be understood as universal. However, while we might agree that everyone participates in the practice of rhetoric, we must also acknowledge that they do so within bounded constructs such as geography, culture, religion, and education, as well as (indeed, contributing to) theoretical or philosophical traditions. Rhetoric, in other words, may be universally practiced—by Indigenous rhetors no less than others—but the specific rhetorical modes and the reasons (purposes or goals) for using them may vary widely. By rhetorical modes, I mean those presences and performances (forms, styles, texts, manners, methods, or means) employed in persuasion, assertion, and/or resistance and which can become types of auto(system)matic behaviors. In this way, rhetoric is determined and determines; it is created and creates; it is used to distinguish "this" from "that" and "us" from "them." Seen in this light, we can accept that rhetorical modes seen in (univers)ity systems are not employed for (univers)al purposes and goals. Rather, they are (univers)*alized* to privilege one body of knowledge over other types or modes of knowledges. They are, in other words, suited for purposes and goals specific to AngloAmerican academic contexts, which subsequently function beyond academia to serve the idea of a unified AngloAmerican nationhood separate from that reserved for Native populations.

Different communities utilize different rhetorical traditions, which results in different rhetorics and/or different stories. As Cox (2006) reminds us, stories define "the basic structures and values of a community, and when two communities or nations come into conflict, so do their storytelling traditions" (p. 62). Some stories are used to control or dominate; some are used to exert sovereignty. As rhetorical exchanges are illustrated and explored in Interchapter 4 and Chapter 5, we unfortunately see evidence of rhetorical sovereignty's opposite, rhetorical

imperialism. Rhetorical imperialism suggests that those who establish the terms set the limits as well (Lyons, 2000, p. 452); hence, terms and limits are operationalized through rhetoric. In the case of the AITE site, terms involved canon, curriculum,[16] and pedagogy. Unfortunately, one participant suggested, "There was never any conscious examination of the programs or the courses or the instructors, and the inherent barriers that are a part of our institution, our courses, our curriculum, our instruction." The participant continued,

> And while, on a case-by-case basis, I think, for myself anyway, I was aware of what I needed to do, or thought I needed to do differently, it was (the approach, the effort) it was always, "We'll get the student more support" or "We'll provide the student with remediation" or "We will provide care for family or mental health services" but there was never any conscious effort to say, "Your curriculum is offensive. Your instruction's offensive. The structure of the admissions process is ineffective. The building is ineffective" or whatever. Those efforts were never examined systemically.

When terms or elements—in this case canon, curriculum, and pedagogy—are not systemically examined, it connotes rhetorical imperialism. When institutions and departments determine which texts can be used and how courses will be structured and delivered, in other words, they attempt to determine and limit the outcomes. As the quote indicates, support given as an acknowledgement of power is different from support given as a result of assumed deficit (remediation, health services).

When American Indians attempt to navigate a contested rhetorical space, a good amount of flexibility and latitude is required from all the stakeholders involved. If these characteristics are not present, and if stakeholders do not both acknowledge and encourage rhetorical sovereignty, it is difficult for Natives to make any actionable decisions regarding goals, modes, styles, or languages. Their attempts will be met with immediate (often hostile) pushback or silence and avoidance. This dynamic is apparent in Perry Gilmore, David Smith, and Larry

[16] I use this term as defined by Brad Porfilio, Julie Gorlewski, and David Gorlewski (2011), who suggest it is an expansive term covering all aspects of teaching and learning, or the content of schooling in all its forms (Call for Book Prospectuses For Sense Series).

Kairaiuak's (1997) experience. It is one we would be advised to keep in mind as this dissertation proceeds.

In the case Gilmore, Smith, and Kairaiuak (1997) present, Native Alaskan students along with their home communities encountered hostility when they enacted rhetorical sovereignty in response to public accusations of benefiting from inequitable grading procedures and practices. When their integrity was called into question, thus discrediting their academic efforts and credentials, Native students took deliberate action. They wrote letters and memos, made phone calls, and engaged in both private and public dialogue. Although they were eventually exonerated, it took over nine months to do so. It left them deeply shaken and with somewhat damaged reputations. In terms of the grading uproar, where students lived the experience viscerally, university administrators treated the event as an abstract, academic debate to be approached objectively and dispassionately, a stance reflective of a very different theoretical perspective that rhetorically played out very differently. Conversely, Native students for whom educational experiences could not be seen as separate from their "place within their families" and communities felt the accusation personally and communally: as a kick in the stomach, so to speak (p. 94). They felt shamed and betrayed by the faculty's failure to take quick action to support them.

The way Native presence and enactments of rhetorical sovereignty were evaluated during this incident reflects both pushback and avoidance by faculty and administrators and tells us that enacting rhetorical sovereignty in contested spaces can have repercussions with weighty emotional and material consequences. The AITE program attempted rhetorical sovereignty and took the brunt of similar consequences. While individual students and instructors worked the creases of survivance in their relations with the AITE program and its students, radical systemic change was not forthcoming at the institution. Under these circumstances (terms), the self-

determination through self-education originally envisioned and performed by AITE was limited, curtailed even, by rhetorical imperialism. Rhetorical imperialism exacted a high price, the discontinuance of the program. Erasing the program was a way to avoid confrontations concerning Indigenous enactments of rhetorical sovereignty.

As the literature and examples presented thus far indicate, the purpose of focusing on sovereignty in this document (whether legal-political or rhetorical) is to increasingly indigenize the academy and/or the public sphere. This is necessary because while Native peoples certainly have the necessary and authoritative epistemologies (knowledges, histories, and experiences) to determine and direct their own educational paths, university systems applaud and glorify "Western societies as the highest form of human organization, and promote the emulation of North American culture to the next generation of citizens (and to Indigenous students as well unless there is some critical intervention)" (Alfred, 2004, p. 96; see also Barnhardt, 2002 for a similar argument). Indigenous Studies scholarship must work to change the power dynamics—the terms—of this situation.

Power dynamics concerning integration, separation, survivance, and rhetorical sovereignty play out—albeit un/subconsciously for most non-Native participants—in the funding, policy, curricula, and programmatic decisions surrounding programs for Native populations. Non-Native participants in this study, for example, as well as some participants of color holding positions of authority, were more likely to view integration in a most positive light, assuming that thereby Native students might gain more cultural/academic capital and advance toward degrees, certification, and professionalization with greater alacrity. They saw integration as the goal and promise of AITE and, indeed, of education for all Native peoples. To them, it was a matter of, as one participant said, "finding a way to be successful in recruiting populations like that onto the university (without funding and extra supports), and integrat[ing] them."

Conversely, Native participants met offers, suggestions, and even demands of integration with varying degrees of acceptance, accommodation, adaptation, and resistance. Their goals, as stated in interviews, conversations, and public speeches, were directed toward Native solidarity and toward providing empowerment for Native communities. To quote just one participant, education was about "putting more into your boat so you can contribute more to your community."[17] Beyond individual benefit—important though that was—Native participants expressed the need for their educations to produce at least some community benefit, if not idealized self-determination or sovereignty.

When acknowledged as a positive force, sovereignty exerts increased power and works toward self-determination through self-education. Power, as Stoffle, Zedeno, and Halmo (2001) tell us, does not reside in static positions but in movement, in active presence. Power varies according to who possesses it and how it is used. It is different in intensity and strength and has harmony or balance as its primary purpose. It can, when necessary, adapt to and accommodate change. Indeed, both adaptation and accommodation are imperative to increasing power. Adaptation is imperative because cultures, *all* cultures, "that do not [adapt] cannot survive" (Powell, 2004, p. 40). Accommodation is imperative because it facilitates the construction of necessary alliances across different rhetorical traditions. Beatrice Medicine (2001) believes that power for Indigenous populations involves adaptation, accommodation, revision, and change. However, she provides the highly important caveat that *EuroWestern* academic culture also adapt, revise, and change to be in harmony with Indian ways. Indigenous power is accrued through acts of both survivance and rhetorical sovereignty. These, in turn, afford broader understanding of Native historical and contemporary lives and epistemologies in educational settings. Preeminent Lakota scholar, Vine Deloria Jr. (1970) tells us they go hand in hand, and the responsibility

[17] The participant attributes this phrase to Clinical Instructor, Nola Lodge (Oneida).

inherent in sovereignty "is oriented primarily toward the existence and continuance of a group" (p. 123). Such a stance does not deny the possibilities afforded by education in EuroWestern institutions but seeks to place its influence within a relevant cultural context where Indigenous power is an integral part.

Although I have shown through this review of literature how ideas of separation can be associated with rhetorical sovereignty and ideas of integration associated with survivance, these too are layers, not fixed positions. By acknowledging, for example, the sometimes-detrimental affects of attempting integration, of attempting to tack AngloAmerican educational practices onto Indigenous experience, scholars like Hermes admit a need for strategic separation. Similarly, Womack's (1999) ostensibly 'separatist' position does not deny that intersecting histories are coterminous and influence one another. Importantly, neither case contradicts Indigenous understandings of interconnection or relationship. What each does, however, is argue that adequate awareness and attention be paid to the reality of Indigenous lived experience as placed apart and 'separate from' AngloAmerican culture before attending to the ways those lives and experiences are impacted by and connected to dominant others. Being aware of the multiple layers involved in integration/survivance and separation/rhetorical sovereignty affords an increase of power and possibility as well as a far more complex and just understanding of Native and non-Native interactions.

Certainly, presenting the debates as briefly as I have here tends to reduce their treatment and oversimplify an extremely complex debate. Yet, just as certainly, much tension concerning Native presence and performance within university contexts seems rooted in these oversimplifications. As demonstrated earlier, the struggles at Rough Rock and other similar sites illustrate why it becomes necessary to question the validity of programmatic structures or architectures that are put into place without at least some attempt at Indigenous self-direction

and control (see also Barnhardt, C., 1994, Barnhardt, R., 2002; Deloria, 1988, 2001; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001; Lomawaima, 2000; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002, 2006). A majoritarian system, after all, effects separation to maintain structural or institutional power. American Indians likewise employ separation to exercise sovereignty with regard to self-determined authority and/or control, thus retaining the ability to choose for themselves how they will separate or integrate, how they will acquire and or exert additional rhetorical, structural, and institutional power within university systems. We can, therefore, acknowledge the ways histories are inextricably connected and hybridic yet still understand that a certain politically, legally, and educationally effective Indigeneity relies upon at least some degree of separation.

When students experience negative consequences within the university because their performances don't fit the mold of assumed being and doing, they are negatively labeled "deficient" and/or "resistant." When Native students, organizations, or programs enact unexpected performances because they resist social, political, and educational assimilation, they are often seen as having failed. Not often are these experiences labeled failures of the system to recognize Native sovereignty concomitant with a refusal to be governed or controlled. Nor does the academy typically encourage an alternative performance: a hybridic mode of thinking, doing, and being (see Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Taking this position creates a corollary imperative: to (re)discover and (re)center Indigenous ways of thinking and being and speaking and authoring in educational praxis. This stance emphasizes that Native peoples know and understand their histories and cultural lives best and are in the most authoritative position to (re)present and (re)interpret them in educational settings based on identifiable Indigenous principles and values and in accordance with established policy and law.

Unpacking the debates at the multiple conceptual levels presented in this chapter indicates the difficulty, overlap, and pushback of rhetorical positioning. It indicates why we must

very carefully and in greater depth interpret interactions that position Indigenous students and programs. It also indicates why we must move beyond initial first layers of intercultural interactions and interpret from multiple, nuanced perspectives, especially Indigenous ones. If, based on the literature, we take it as a given that participants must acknowledge a shared sense of history and then employ strategic separation in order to increase understanding of Native sovereignty within the academy, then this project seeks answers to the troubling questions concerning to what measure, in what ways, and with what consequence. How do notions of sovereignty shape acts of presence and performance for participants involved? What do these acts mean?

Interchapter 2 attends to tensions surrounding rhetorical sovereignty as participants adapt and accommodate to increase their power and possibility. The scene I present here is again one of the mandatory supplemental instruction sessions. Through presence and performance, participants negotiate integration/survivance as well as separation/rhetorical sovereignty. The scene documents and interrogates participant interactions as they confront shared history and Native participants attempt to recenter their contemporary Indigeneity. The contextualized performances involve degrees of negotiation between individual and group, content and context, and stasis and change. During negotiation, participant performers seek to resolve tensions that have been raised (see Bauman & Briggs, 1990), but success in this regard is determined by differing ideas of sovereignty.

Interchapter 2: More Power and More Life

Lisa and I again arrive a few minutes late to the session. We have been visiting with a former colleague, Caitlin, who is now at another university and who is back conducting follow-up interviews with AITE students who participated in previous research. She has agreed to sit in on the session today. We are interested in her reactions, knowing her previous experiences with

AITE students and her familiarity with the theoretical and practical issues involved in such work. The setting is the same, but today the instructors have provided a lunch of deli sandwiches, chips, and bottled water enough to feed the whole cohort and its instructors. Students should be studying hard today for an exam this evening, and perhaps instructors think food will be an extra enticement to attend. I think they have begun to see the important social and communal function that food serves for this community of American Indian students. But even food has not drawn them in today. Only three students are attending: Mary, the graduate student facilitator, plus Dana, Connie, and Anne. Ruth's two colleagues have rejoined the session; so, as instructors and mentors, we out number students today.

Anne is quietly engaged in studying a text with one of the instructors. She asks questions; the instructor answers and demonstrates. They sit side by side, leaning forward to talk and listen. It seems like a productive activity. Ruth does not greet us, but the others say hello. I have not met the instructor working with Anne, but I don't think about introducing myself. Neither does the instructor. Perhaps this is because the instructor defines the job specifically as interacting with the students and not their mentors, just as I define my job as primarily interacting with students and not instructors. Or perhaps the instructor assumes that since we know *of* one another, we have met. Ruth is busy with some papers in her hand, a calendar of classes the students are taking and a schedule of their assignments and tests. She tries to begin the session by standing and working through the schedule with the students who are present. She reminds them of work due soon, but students correct her, reminding her that class was canceled last week due to snow and so schedules have changed.

This week, Dana seems a little more cheerful about being here. She smiles more, speaks more. I know that sometime in the last two weeks AITE directors have counseled her to "check her attitude" regarding the meeting. Connie, on the other hand, seems more frustrated than last

time. This becomes apparent when she asks with a forced smile, "Can we just go study by ourselves?" One of the instructors replies by explaining that they "want this to be a cohort" and they are "only asking for one hour of [her] time to help the group effort," to which Connie replies, "Dana and I were quizzing each other at home. We were studying." With some amount of frustration herself, the instructor asks, "Well, do you have any questions?"

Connie sighs and settles into a chair. Ruth asks her to define a concept related to content material that might be on the test. Connie responds by deliberately exhibiting her knowledge: clarifying the question and giving not one but two possible answers. Ruth nods and then pushes further, asking about an additional concept in the context of a case study. Dana replies to this question, deftly referring to the case study to explain her answer. Then the instructor turns to Anne: "Anne, do you have any questions? It looks like you have flash cards." Anne pauses, thumbs through her homemade flash cards listing acronyms and definitions, and then says: "I'm not usually vocal. I learn from listening to discussion. If I have a question, I ask at another time."

The room suddenly becomes very quiet. The third instructor, who has been sitting across the room, now stands. With purposeful energy, this instructor walks toward Anne, forces eye contact and insists, "Well, this is that time!" After a few seconds of silently considering her options, Anne acquiesces to the command. When she begins to speak, I realize I have been holding my breath. I look around the room to see if anyone else noticed the interaction. Most of us are looking down at our hands, but we are all concentrating hard on listening to what Anne has to say.

She talks about her difficulty understanding what the instructor expects when she asks test questions, an issue that has obviously been bothering her. She begins: "In class, [the instructor] throws in her opinion a lot . . . As far as the case study, I was a little lost. There could

be three choices and only two were right. [On the practice test,] I got it wrong. I get lost in the language. I know this is how research and books are written, but I want the clearest answer." She begins to read the case study out loud. It has something to do with writing a student accommodation and something called "glossing" as a procedure to move deaf students toward reading. English print is involved. The rest of us are still quiet.

Sitting beside Anne, the second instructor appears to want to answer but is unsure whether it is expedient to do so, whether it will interfere with the pedagogical approach just taken by the first instructor. The second instructor therefore enters the discussion nonverbally at first: raising eyebrows, glancing at the other instructors, pursing lips, and cocking head. After an adequate pause, allowing the other instructors time to intervene (they do not), the second instructor then suggests that case study questions are very complex—maybe too nuanced for test situations—and that, yes, actually, more than two answers could be construed as correct. The three instructors begin to dialogue about possible right answers. They disagree on fine points, but try to come to agreement broadly. The students alternately watch and listen to the exchange and try to study from their notes.

Dana offers an opinion about the viability of case study questions on an exam. She suggests that [the course instructor] wants students to recognize the issues involved, not necessarily know the 'correct' answer. "I think," she says to Anne, "[the course instructor] just wants us to be able to explain our reasoning." Ruth acknowledges it is a good observation, but says the instructor might also need students to "see it from a judges' perspectives, not the teachers', because they might see things very differently. This is a law class." In the end, she too agrees that the study guide for the exam—a bulleted list of items—was too general to be very helpful.

Listening and watching the exchange, I am impressed by Connie, Anne, and Dana's smart and strategic resistance to instructional authority. When called out, Connie demonstrates knowledge. When her request to engage the subject matter on her own terms is not respected, Anne turns the spotlight to a questionable testing tactic. Instead of attempting to smooth over the tension in the room, she politely but pointedly confronts it. Dana then supports Anne by attempting to clarify the issue for her and, perceptively, by following up with a point of valid, academic student/teacher discrepancy. If the instructor hasn't made the intent or purpose of the case study questions clear, it would be very easy for a student to become confused and sidetracked trying to choose 'correct' answers, rather than looking for underlying issues and defending choices based on knowledge of those issues. As Anne's question demonstrates, many students are schooled to look for 'right' answers.

By this time, the session has gone over its allotted hour. Students shift in their seats and look at the clock. They are anxious to leave and continue studying, so they are dismissed. Lisa, Caitlin, and I gather our things to leave as well, but the instructors come over to discuss the session with us. They want to call another general meeting to stress the importance of these mandatory meetings. They want us to attend, along with the AITE directors and staff members, thus indirectly asking for support, for agreement that the sessions are important. If the mandatory status were to be emphasized in this way, we would have to see to it that students attended. To corroborate their stance, the instructors turn to Mary and remind her that she went through the program without a cohort and how much more difficult it was for her because that was the case. Although the reminder is directed at Mary, it is also aimed at us as mentors, another indirect attempt to evoke agreement. We listen and steal covert glances at one another. The mandatory label has not been particularly effective in getting students to attend and

participate in the sessions thus far. Another meeting to rope in additional enforcers, we think, will not make much difference.

CHAPTER 3

AN INTRICATE AND DELICATE METHODOLOGICAL WEB

> Native peoples have used the very policies and beliefs . . . meant to remove, reserve assimilate, acculturate, abrogate, and un-see us as the primary tools through which to reconceive our history, to reimagine Indian-ness in our own varying and multiplicitous images, to create and re-create our presence on this continent. (Powell, 2002, p. 428)

In the quote introducing this chapter, Powell (2002) suggests that recentering presence and performance might occur by appropriating the very policies and beliefs used to erase Indigenous presence in contemporary society. Research constitutes one of the tools alluded to here that can be used to reconceive and reimagine history. However, much research from the 1800s forward—particularly of the anthropological sort—has largely been undertaken by non-Native scholars who study "Indian" subjects/objects and or ostensibly "vanishing" communities. Research in this vein has been deemed highly problematic and has been met with strenuous resistance because of the way it simulates Indianness rather than accounting for actual, lived, material realities and possibilities of contemporary Native life (Deloria, 1998 [1969]; Bilosi & Zimmerman, 1998). In many instances this type of research objectifies, dissects, disrespects, and/or co-opts Indigenous community knowledges for majoritarian gain (Smith, 1999, 2007). Vizenor (1999) repudiates the arrogance of such research, which is often undertaken by a culture that "believes in . . . experts who create simulations, and . . . that believes in such experts over natives, over the wit and wisdom of native stories, and . . . celebrates . . . simulations over a native presence" (p. 90).

Native scholarly work of the last few decades has begun to remediate this situation and to make it clear that all research theories, methodologies, and methods used in conjunction with Native communities should be endorsed or accepted by and ultimately undertaken for the benefit of those communities (see Cushman, 2008; Gilmore & Smith, 2005). In the last few decades, this type of research has occurred primarily by shifting the focus from research "on" to research by, with, in, and for Indigenous communities. In 2005, for example, *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* published a special themed issue edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith. The issue dealt with Indigenous epistemologies and their relationship to educational policies and practices. Authors in this special issue used and called for critical ethnographic methodologies to demonstrate commitments to decolonized and collaborative research leading to increases in self-determination. They stressed how important it is to bring Indigenous knowledges, cultures, and communities to the fore without reducing them by romanticizing them, and they pointed toward better ways to account for and address contemporary Indigenous realities. They called for additional innovative research.

As I prepared to conduct the research of this dissertation, I tried to be receptive to this call. I first looked for scholarly precedence, for appropriate and applicable models of research occurring by, with, in, and for Indigenous communities in historical contexts as well as in more recent ones. I found accounts rejecting deficit or deprivation views while remaining cognizant of colonized histories (Kanaʻiaupuni, 2004; Kawagley, 2006; Meyer, 2003; Smith, 1999, 2007). I also found accounts that (re)created Indigenous possibility and helped reconceptualize research from an Indigenous perspective (Barnhardt, 2002; Cushman, 1996, 2011; Enoch, 2002; Katanski, 2005; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001; McLaughlin, 1989, 1995; Watahomigie, 1995). These accounts guided my choice of methodology, and I began to envision ways I could facilitate better interactions between

Natives and non-Natives and greater possibilities for indigenizing higher education at the chosen research site.

Specifically, I saw that I could incorporate Powell's (2002) critique of practices that "unsee" Native realities and Brayboy's (2005b) explicit focus on realities important to American Indian peoples, acknowledging that as a group they experience liminality in very specific racialized and legal-political ways. Additionally, I could take Gilmore and Smith's (2005) admonition to heart and determine that when there was a choice to use EuroWestern or Indigenous terms of reference, guidelines, positions, and documentation I would choose the latter (see also Cook-Lynn, 1996; Cox, 2006). Finally, as much as possible, I could choose to forefront Native stories, acknowledging that in American Indian communities, as Brayboy (2005a) mentions, "stories are theories"[18] (p. 426; see also Powell, 2012), not separate from them. Stories, according to tenets of Tribal Critical Theory (TribalCrit), are legitimate sources of data, and they constitute justifiable ways of coming to understand that data (p. 429). Indeed, Vizenor in an interview with Laura Coltelli (1992) says, "You can't understand the world without telling a story. There isn't any center to the world but a story" (p. 156).

In all these ways, I attempted to construct research guided by a sense, as Vizenor (1999) prompts, of Native wit and wisdom. This approach not only acknowledges the past but also, in the strongest scholarly language possible, asserts its ability to powerfully guide the work of the future, thus working toward more power, more life. The methodologies and methods undergirding my research thus helped me take a different political stance from early research that was conducted and written from a colonial perspective.

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[18] In this respect, TribalCrit has much in common with theories based on race and minoritized status, such as Critical Race and Feminist theories (testimonio). It diverges, however, with respect to legal/political status, i.e., with respect to sovereignty.

However, since my life experience does not arise from an Indigenous ethnie, the call to "re-learn" and "re-listen" while conducting research required constant vigilance on my part (Powell, 2004, p. 398). As a "preflexive" process (Quijada, 2011, personal communication), re-learning and re-listening comprised deep thinking about Indigenous principles of respect, relationship, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility or what Barnhardt (2001) calls the Rs of Indigenous study and research (see also Ball, 2010; Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom, 2011; Fixico, 2003; Kimmerer, 2002; Romero, 1994; World Parliament of Indigenous Peoples, 2010). The Rs[19] taught me that as I conducted research I also acted as a participant, and I therefore needed to acquire a reflexive stance while accounting for the creative intersubjectivity of all research participants. I had to address the "complex interplay of [my] own personal biography, power and status" with that of the various others who agreed to participate in this research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 93) and remember to turn the gaze both outward and inward (or back) on my own subjectivity and positionality (see Davis, 1999; Madison, 2012).

Turning Back the Gaze

Mats Alvesson and Kaj Skoldberg (2003) describe reflexivity as "the open play of reflection across various levels"—I might say layers—"of interpretation" (p. 248). It is multidimensional and interactive in nature; it draws attention to "the complex relationship between processes of knowledge production and the various contexts of such processes as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer[s]" (p. 5). Reflexivity was necessary, in other words, to adequately appraise the way I made connections between what we as participants thought we knew (the 'knowledge') and the ways we came to acquire that

[19] See also http://www.idrc.ca/cp/ev-9310-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html; and http://web.uvic.ca/igov/; http://www.ecdip.org/ethics/readings.htm.

knowledge (the process or 'ways of doing/being'). After all, many kinds of linguistic, social, political, and theoretical elements intertwine during the overlapping processes of developing empirical research (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2003). As Linda Alcoff (1991) suggests—and this is a phrase I take up in the title of this chapter—we are all "caught in an intricate, delicate web in which each action [we] take, discursively or otherwise, pulls on, breaks off, or maintains the tension in many strands of web in which others find themselves moving also" (p. 20).

Sandy Grande (2000) counts reflexivity as one of critical pedagogies' greatest strengths, yet Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2011) suggest it has been lacking in earlier critical theory and methodology that is politically focused. Reflexivity, D. Soyini Madison (2012) maintains, is imperative to ethically conducting research because a focus on politics is incomplete without it. We must move, she asserts, from "simply politics to the politics of positionality" (p. 7). In this sense, the research undertaken here draws on the work of George Noblit, Susana Flores, and Enrique Murillo (2004), who assert the necessity and validity of attending to power, privilege, and biases while also interrogating the power structures that surround research praxis.

When I consider my interactions with other participants, multiple tensions in positionality are highlighted. One is that I come to this research from a relatively privileged background. I say relative because while I benefit from a heritage aligning with AngloAmerican epistemologies—my family and community members talked, read, and sang to me in English and taught me from classical English language texts—that benefit is mediated by coming from a rural, ranching environment. I have spoken about these constraints elsewhere with their related tensions arising from contradictory senses of place (Watanabe, 2006). Just the other day, I off handedly identified the Idaho valley where I grew

up as "my" country, momentarily ignoring the historical and material fact that the place where my family and neighbors lived and worked was once Shoshone Bannock land. It is an irony that does not escape me today living in Utah and studying at a university that is situated on what was previously Ute land. Negotiating these tensions involves stepping into multiple contact zones, as Mary Louise Pratt (1991) argues. The shared and separate histories we all brought to the research—mine, along with the other participants and the institutional departments' under whose auspices we work—were a constant reminder of the political and ethical responsibilities involved in such research.

As a first-generation college student now approaching the last gatepost of a PhD program, I understand and appreciate in a very personal way some of the roadblocks Native students encounter in educational institutions. I also acknowledge that there are some things I will never fully understand or appreciate. My typically (non)racialized presence, for instance, allows me to move fairly comfortably in academic spaces. I do not normally have to think about whether my presence or performance will be perceived negatively based on my phenotype. Nor do I typically worry that my home community might be judged based on my individual actions.

Additionally, stepping into various teaching and administrative positions over the course of my educational career has allowed me to experience mentoring, curriculum, outreach, and writing instruction. In these positions, I was privileged to acquire and hone valuable skills that helped me learn to embody the kind of academic capital valued by an urban university system. Through these experiences, I learned to navigate multiple layers of intersubjective exchanges, which prepared me to both do my work and also to interrogate my work. Other participant mentors acquired navigational skills even earlier than I did. As one mentor states,

> When you think about the kind of person that school is geared towards, it wasn't a big transition [for me]. Both my parents have Masters degrees, so I came from a very well educated background, which meant that people could help with homework. Somebody had been through the process and expected that I would apply to college. The kinds of things taught in kindergarten, I learned at home. Those values. None of those things were new or different for my family or other people in my community. Most of the time, I found stories about people like me [in the curriculum]. I never had to change the way I wrote, particularly. I got called on when I raised my hand. It was a pretty familiar experience.

The educative process of the university was not this familiar in this way for many Native participants, and the AITE program and participants thus benefitted from mentor expertise. Reciprocally, mentors benefited from association with AITE. I, for instance, learned first hand from the humor and banter, the anger and grief, the strategizing and debriefings associated with Indigenous persons experiencing education in a university environment.

I felt privileged to be a research assistant at the AITE site. I wanted to be there. I was also, however, paid to be there. If not for being offered this position, I probably would not have ventured into American Indian scholarship. Because of my family background, I began my PhD expecting to work with Asian and/or Pacific communities, but when the opportunity presented itself I was happy to spend 20 hours a week immersed in Indigenous Studies scholarship so that I could begin to write AITE (and, yes, myself) into the ongoing academic conversation. I was drawn into a generous circle of colleagues. I was placed as a co-investigator on IRB approved research, which meant I was given access to pertinent data, including course curricula, assignment sheets, and personal narratives. I did my best to mentor, support, and advocate for Native students, and I felt the weighty responsibility of being allowed into these students' lives and experiences. I was expected to take an engaged, activist role in behalf of Native communities, an expectation I was willing to attempt although I had no prior experience doing so.

As a research assistant, I was afforded credibility I would not have otherwise had. AITE students, particularly the cohort with whom I worked most closely, were more inclined to trust me (and my academic know-how) because the director and staff did. Trust was not by any means automatic, but in difficult situations—when I inadvertently gave offense, was too pushy or not pushy enough or did not understand students and situations—I was given the chance to understand, apologize, and try again. Trust thus developed over time through daily academic and social association, as I learned what was required and expected of me. (*Why doesn't everyone know these things?)* The lively intelligence of the students filled me with gratitude for our association. (*Why don't others see this?*) Their encounters with prejudice and discrimination left me sick at heart. (*How could this be happening?*) I came to realize in a quite visceral way that these were important issues, and this was an important research site. This realization marked the beginning of a shift from research undertaken as a research assistant on behalf of the program to the independent research I would later conduct for purposes of this dissertation.

Taken together, this knowledge and experience positioned my participation in interesting ways and, in some measure, colored how I proceeded through this study: confidently because I had previous academic expertise, cautiously because of what I knew I did not know about Indigenous education. I had years of higher education experience as both a student and a teacher; I had very little experience with Native communities prior to my involvement with AITE. I had to assume this knowledge differential influenced how Native and non-Native participants responded to me before, during, and after the research had been conducted. Some considered me a colleague, some a fellow student; some considered me a suspicious intruder and some a useful ally. Their responses (or refusals to respond) informed investigation and interpretation of the meaning-making texts constituting

the data of this study, the information they entrusted to me as well as what they allowed me to do with that information.

Upon reflection, I have come to realize just how difficult the task is for people within White-dominate universities to understand and serve Indigenous communities well. I have observed higher education's spotty record in this regard, and I have experienced it in numerous challenges of my own. As I write this, an AITE participant has noted how other students may have received higher overall grades during their program of study but she felt she received higher grades for her course papers due to my writing assistance. Reading this, I have to wonder whether this was a good thing. How closely did mentoring slide into interference? How much help was too little, enough, or too much? By the same token, what level of interference am I running in conducting this research? As I ponder these questions, I once again realize, as my Indigenous friends remind me, that reflexivity and positionality require deep humility, an ephemeral quality almost always just out of my reach but one I keep striving for.

Alliance on Middle Ground

Some saw the choices and processes involved in this study as approaching the research site with bias. They suggested that because of my relationship to participants I was much too involved to be able to gather and interpret data objectively. Indeed, because of time spent as a research assistant at the site, I came to the site with questions concerning how educational theory and practice intersected with explicit social justice platforms within systems of higher education, such as the one underlying the department from which I will receive my degree. Like Carspecken (1996), I often found academic instruction to be "unfair, unequal, and both subtly and overtly oppressive for many people" (p. 7). I expressly undertook this research to question the ways participant exchanges were constructed to

favor EuroWestern and or AngloAmerican notions of presence and performance. I was not at all sure these constructions fairly or adequately served Indigenous populations. This understanding was clear from the beginning of my work with the AITE. Similarly, objectivity in a positivist sense was neither the responsibility nor the goal of this dissertation research.

At the start, I thought of my work with the AITE as a type of literacy sponsorship (Brandt, 1998). I had knowledge students needed and was prepared to share. However, directors and coordinators soon instructed me that my responsibility was not to be a sponsor but an ally, to "walk beside but let [Natives] guide." These instructions, I was given to understand, meant our alliance would be guided by principles of sovereignty and Indigenous epistemologies. In practice, this meant that when I did not understand how to proceed ("What should I do?"), I was to "shoulder the responsibility" ("It's up to you!") of "putting lessons learned into operation" and then "work at solving the mystery" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 26). I was, in other words, to put my own knowledge, intuition, and expertise to work while also putting my knowledge of "sovereignty and ancient knowledge" into practice (p. 27). I was to bring whatever knowledge and expertise I had acquired to the table and let it be mediated by Native knowledge and expertise.

This calls to mind Powell's (2004) request that scholars meet within a middle ground based on reciprocity or "equal sharing and borrowing" because, she says, Native "strength was, and is, in alliance and in the ability to adapt to rapidly changing worlds" (p. 39). Powell further states, "If we are to be allies, we must share some understanding of one another's beliefs. We don't have to *believe* one another's beliefs, but we do have to acknowledge their importance, understand them as real, and respect/honor them in our dealings with one another" (p. 42). As a non-Native mentor and researcher, I did not share a common ethnie, but I shared a responsibility to promote better and more respectful educational experiences

for Indigenous students. Like Powell, I saw this as a place of possibility, one built not on idealism but rather on historical understanding (p. 41). I understood that alliance[20] could have balance and harmony as long as I put a check on my EuroWestern sense of what constituted privileged knowledge.

Although I draw on the idea of alliance, I do not want to understate the difficulty of unpacking tensions in participant exchanges at this site. As mentioned earlier, entering the space (I almost used "arena" because that is often what it feels like) of American Indian education at the point of AngloAmerican contact meant walking into tension and conflict. Few felt entirely comfortable speaking about these tensions with me, let alone revisiting them as they were asked to do in this research, especially in the company of others and most especially in company with non-Native authority figures. Many who were involved with AITE would have rather ignored, avoided, or glossed over the hard conversations. Yet, this is precisely why the types of interactions studied in this project needed to occur. In this regard, Linda Flower's (2003) rationale spoke to me as a researcher. She says it is a paradox that "the things dividing us that are hardest to share—the deep roots of history, the racially shaped experience, and the repertoire of interpretive strategies we use to make sense of that experience—may also be the ones we need most to communicate" (p. 55). This statement led me to understand that if we—educators, participants, all—are to live up to our rhetoric of support for Indigenous self-determination, we must confront the issues of absence/ presence and performance in American Indian education face-to-face. If in doing so we sometimes feel needled, stung, or pricked, that is to be expected. It is, to use Vizenor's term, the "socioaccupuncture" that if experienced at the right time can "heal and liberate"

[20] I utilize the term "alliance" in the context of this document. However, the concept is additionally nuanced in discussions of "affiliative disposition" (see Diab, Godbee, Grimm, Ferrel, & Watanabe, 2012).

(Vizenor & Lee, 1999, p. 82). In undertaking this project, then, I assert it is the right time to experience socioaccupuncture in theory, methodology, and method and to story these exchanges toward healing and liberatory change. We cannot afford more failed or discontinued programs for Native students. There is too much at stake.

Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies

Given the topic and participants of this research, I knew my decisions regarding methodology and method would be critical in both general and academic senses of the word. EuroWestern/AngloAmerican research typically places high emphasis on "componentiality, specialization, systematicity, bureaucracy and literate forms characteristic of Western institutions and modern consciousness" (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001, p. 6). These, however, are not always conducive to Indigenous epistemologies, either theoretically or methodologically. For this reason, I wished to avoid a strict discursive analysis methodology that placed hyper-vigilant emphasis on categorization, parsing, and segmentation to supposedly yield logical, linear, and sequential control. As Gunther Kress (2003) reminds us, attempting to adapt "mode-specific theories" to other modes and venues can result in "severe distortions" (p. 107). In other words, wholesale adoption and application of Western theories and methodologies to Native contexts would certainly not be seamless and could do great damage.

In addition, I needed to communicate with and relate to participants in such a way that multiple and interactive layers of dialogue and interpretation could be considered an advantage. Most importantly, this engagement process needed to occur within an Indigenous framework, one that acknowledged the primacy of story in theorizing and helping to establish relationship/relationality. According to Deloria (1970), the best way for allies to

engage would be to meet at the points surrounding common or shared issues, at Powell's middle ground, we could say. Deloria explains,

> Since tribal society is integrated toward a center and non-Indian society is oriented toward linear development, the process might be compared to describing a circle surrounded with tangent lines. The points at which the lines touch the circumference of the circle are the issues and ideas that can be shared by Indians and other groups. There are a great many points at which tangents occur, and they may be considered as windows through which Indians and non-Indians can glimpse each other. Once this structural device is used and understood, non-Indians, using a tribal point of view, can better understand themselves and their relationship to Indian people. (p. 12)

As an allied researcher, my responsibility was to find those tangential points of shared interest, the points where my research concerns intersected with those of other participants. I could then use those points as a structural device to help facilitate greater understanding and respect, and greater relatedness. This way, we could fulfill our responsibility or accountability to each other, to the local context, and to the larger world around us—to all our relations.

The challenge, I knew, would be striving for harmonious and respectful practices when, inevitably, tensions arose at those intersections. I therefore drew from critical theories and methodologies that place an ethical responsibility on researchers to address "processes of unfairness or injustice within a particular lived domain" (Madison, 2011, p. 5). This meant that, like Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman (2006) suggest, it was necessary to investigate the "historical forces shaping societal patterns as well as the fundamental issues and dilemmas of policy, power, and dominance in institutions, including their role in reproducing and reinforcing inequities" (p. 6). It also meant utilizing research methods that combined praxis with intersubjectivity "to develop the concepts of difference and hope" (Tierney, 1994, p. 100). Such methodologies required reflexivity, collaboration, and reciprocity among all research participants (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000). Considering these

critical elements, the right methodological choice was Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies (Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom, 2011).

Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies or CIRM places emphasis on principles of Indigenous scholarship. For this reason, I grounded the study in Indigenous scholarship, and also for this reason I placed primary research emphasis on what Native participants said and did, including the meanings they gave to their experiences and the interpretations that arose from thinking through those experiences. Secondary emphasis was accorded the responses and actions of other participants. These primary and secondary emphases better met the need to confront tensions in Native and non-Native academic interactions. Privileging Native accounts occasionally presented challenges for me as a non-Native researcher,[21] in that the accounts or stories did not belong to me. Although I gathered them, I did not own them. Nor could I ever fully know them. They were gifted to me along with the weighty responsibility of attending to them respectfully. The risk and effort (and, I hope, the reward) involved in entrusting them to me were certainly known by the givers. One participant said this:

> I'm participating. I'm consenting to this interview, this research because I want to talk about this, for one. I think it's important that it be said. Having taken a community based research course—and this idea of reciprocity—as a person of color in this institution I know that I have to give of myself to teach. I'm okay with that sometimes and sometimes I'm not. Right now, I am. The ideal situation would be a person of color doing this research. Not that people of color are not doing this research, I'm sure [they] are, but the fact is nobody has asked me to do this. Nobody has asked me what my story is or how all the dots connect for me in my experience. And I want to talk about it. That's why I was more than glad to do it.

Gifting their stories was a collective decision of solidarity on the part of Native participants, albeit a largely unstated one. After a particularly memorable focus group session, I was given to understand this was my responsibility. Across their own differences

[21] See Alcoff's (1991-1992), "The Problem of Speaking for Others."

of tribal affiliation, background, age, and gender, participants wanted to tell a story—not the same story but a complex story—I needed to hear as a researcher and what others needed to hear through me. Even if not all agreed to fully participate in the end, I think they saw storying their experiences as a strategy employed to bring Native presence and performances more prominently to the fore of an academic context. Through storied interpretation, then, I tried to create a situation wherein all participants could examine and interrogate textual and rhetorical content from their own lived experiences while still acknowledging that multiple perspectives were needed to increase understandings and allow for shift or change in praxis. The challenge for me in using this methodology was taking care that non-Native perspectives did not overtake the endeavor, in the sense of White being spread over the top of the seven-layer dish.

Taking a CIRM approach, therefore, more firmly established the tone for how participants—myself no less than the others—handled requisite exchanges of the type that precipitated the research and propelled it forward. Gathering data in this way did not narrow our worldviews; rather, it opened them and helped us prioritize how knowledge was "acquired, exchanged, and valued" (Meyer, 2001b, p. 128). This methodological stance allowed my research praxis to become more pointedly undergirded with Native participants' perspectives. It became more fully imbued with Native "values, priorities and spiritual beliefs" (p. 128) and less with AngloAmerican perspectives: mine and other non-Native scholars and participants. The ensuing gathering and interpretation of data benefited, I think, from such a stance. It encouraged participants to attempt or make effort toward speaking the hard things. It also allowed participants to "breathe in the many aromas of influence" contributing to this project (p. 128). Power differentials were not disregarded in this study;

they hovered over the entire endeavor. Yet, while these tensions were always in play, they remained critical in most instances and did not typically advance toward the adversarial.

CIRM is indebted to earlier iterations of critical theory, most specifically, Critical Race Theory (CRT) and TribalCrit Theory. CRT originated from theoretical law intending to address African American civil rights issues. Other racialized groups subsequently picked up and adjusted its tenets to meet their own needs, resulting in, for example, Latina/o Critical Race Theory and Asian Critical Race Theory. While CRT works from the premise that racism is endemic to society and focuses primarily on the way race and racism impact socio-educational issues and interrelate with other forms of oppression such as class and gender discrimination (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lynn & Parker, 2006), TribalCrit works from a premise of colonization as endemic to society (Brayboy, 2005b). CRT provides a foundational basis for thinking about issues of intersecting oppressions. Alone, however, it is inadequate for addressing the specific needs of Indigenous populations. More is needed in terms of critically addressing sovereignty, the "legal and inherent rights of Indigenous peoples to work toward a vision of [educational] justice determined by communities and in relation to things like land, histories, and resources" (Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom, 2011, pp. 442-443).

As outlined, then, CIRM is rooted in Indigenous knowledge systems. It is anti-colonial and distinctly focused on the needs of Native communities. It is rooted in the Rs of Indigenous research. CIRM as a process fosters relationships between researchers, Native communities, and the topic of inquiry. It recognizes components such as cooperation, trust, collaboration, utility, respect, strength, and accepting Native-appropriate support and guidance. It means attempting to assure that balance and harmony are maintained among all relations, animate and inanimate. Following tenets of CIRM means, for instance, that when

communities are approached for permission to conduct research projects the intent will be "benevolent" and will take into account "generations past, present, and future" (Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom, 2011, p. 437).

CIRM furthermore promotes deep listening. As its proponents assert, "We listen to our gut; we listen to our memories; and we listen to what the old mountains and the wily Coyotes care to share with us" (Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom, 2011, p. 440). Listening in the sense of CIRM is reminiscent of engaging Lyons' (2000) modes of rhetorical sovereignty, with its variety of goals, modes, styles, and languages. We cannot solely rely on or listen to, in other words, print texts for knowledge. Rather, we must also take into account and story the sensory world around us. Returning to Vizenor (Vizenor & Lee, 1999), we are reminded that "heard stories are visual, a performance of words in visual memories. . . . Stories are not in the word, not in the printed word, but in the sound of memories" (p. 140).

Native Hawaiian scholar Manulani Meyer (2001) notes that listening has a sacred component with direct parallels to how we learn, understand, and know. It cannot be forced or coerced and is dependent on interaction with others. She says,

> To pay attention, to really listen (ho'olono) . . . becomes a spiritual act. . . . 'You, yourself, cannot make any of this happen.' It is intimately tied to other and to how we invoke our own genealogy to learn what is most critical. Listening well is found in the act of focus, and focusing is part of what culture helps to define. (p. 132)

Listening and observing is, therefore, a matter of focus in relationship and not at all simply a transfer of information. In agreeing to undertake this study, participants consent to constructing an accountable interpretation (see Flower, Long, & Higgins, 2000), which involves relational, multisensory action: observing, remembering, speaking, deeply listening, and doing.

In earlier research, Brayboy (2005b) has emphasized Indigenous "philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future" as essential starting points for discussion across cultures (p. 429). Gilmore, Smith, and Kairaiuak (1997) and Gilmore and Smith (2005) have done the same. All are emphatic that if Indigenous scholarship accommodates or makes use of other forms or types of knowledges, it should do so in order to meet the larger, community goals of self-determination and sovereignty. As Warrior (1995) argues, without rebuilding community responsibility into educational and research processes, self-determination will most likely promote individual professionalization, accumulation of wealth, and exploitation of land and knowledges rather than Indigenous values or the Rs spoken of earlier.

CIRM follows a critical ethnographic stance, particularly recognizing that colonization exists socially, economically, politically, and/or educationally for Indigenous populations. It contributes ideas about how things might change. In my research, I utilized CIRM to privilege an Indigenous worldview while researching intercultural exchange. My interest in directing intercultural "practice, politics, action, consequences, [and] performances" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. x) toward pedagogies of hope was primarily motivated by recognition of the self-determination and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples. Its purpose was to serve Indigenous communities by taking up methods and techniques drawn from the traditions and knowledges of multiple communities in order to address challenges or issues particular to Indigenous populations. Doing so (re)centered scholarly Indigenous work and brought additional Native stories/knowledges into the academy. Employed altogether, these characteristics made for viable research by, with, in, and for Indigenous communities.

Rivaling as Method/Process

As I contemplated research responsibility in terms of CIRM, I was led to ask questions differently, especially those concerning method. What obligations were assumed when I invited people to participate in this research relationship? How were we to fulfill our roles? How would we concretely facilitate CIRM as we conducted this project? To help answer these questions, I looked to a combination of three processes or methods: Deloria's tangent points as explained earlier, Linda Flower, Elenore Long, and Lorraine Higgins' (2000) "Learning to Rival," and Melissa Freeman's (2006, 2007) dialogic or practical hermeneutics. For convenience, I simply call this combination of methods "rivaling." Rivaling, as I design it, comprises a cyclical, iterative process by which participants confront disparate stories and interpret them for greater understanding, understanding that if used in educational contexts can eventually facilitate better praxis and lead to healing relationships between communities. It is a method reminiscent of socioaccupuncture in that is about the energy involved in storying lived experience. Stories, as they move toward, between, and among participants, circulate as catalytic energy, which, in turn, moves participants to action. Rivaling is practice in learning to listen and hear knowledge (in movement, people, and community). It asserts we cannot "turn our backs and walk away from the story that we do not like or believe" (Cox, 2006, p. 135). Rather, it is a process of confronting Flower's (2003) hard things.

To explain how earlier scholars have influenced my construction of rivaling in this dissertation, I first summarize the action research conducted by Linda Flower (2003) and colleagues at Pittsburgh's Community Literacy Center. I do so to illustrate the "talking across difference" or "intercultural inquiry" that took place in my research (p. 40) and to illustrate one way of bringing multiple scripts and stakeholders into dialogic exchanges for the

purpose of community benefit. Next, I describe the dialogic or practical hermeneutic project of Melissa Freeman (2006) who asserts that research should provide a space for "substantial, critical, and reflective" engagement (p. 83). Such research, she argues, is "essential to building and/or maintaining the . . . deliberative capacities of communities" (p. 83). In Freeman's study, as in my own, community members' became more fully present as they capably deliberated research data, as they performed interpretations of excerpted interview scripts. Since the goal of my dissertation project is to identify and understand how Native students deliberately enact presence and performance for the benefit their communities, Freeman's research becomes especially salient. Finally, I briefly explicate the interpretive methodologies I drew upon to create and analyze this project. These specifically relate to hermeneutic principles such as historicity, tradition, and (pre)judgment (Gadamer, 1998; Ricoeur, 1974a, 1974b, 1976, 1995).

Community Literacy Center

With input from the community, Flower and a team of graduate students designed a series of seven-week literacy workshops at the Community Literacy Center (CLC). The focus of those workshops was to help community members address pertinent local issues. CLC is housed in an inner city area of primarily African American residents, and one volatile community issue was a proposed police-enforced curfew policy for minors. The policy sparked heated debate in the neighborhood. For some, including many teenagers, it raised the twin specters of racial profiling and abuse of power. For others, including some parents and some police officers, it constituted the assurance of safe kids and safe streets. To address these very immediate concerns, a number of teens took Flower's workshop during which

they wrote analyses and position statements in a combination of standardized American English and African American Vernacular English.

At the conclusion of the workshop, the teens staged a production involving dialogic interaction with an audience of community council members, police officers and administrators, family members and friends, public service agencies, media, and university faculty. They performed one script that demonstrated their combined analyses while piping another "rival" script through the auditorium speakers at strategic points to demonstrate counter arguments and the possible affect of those arguments. The teens included digitized visuals and music for added rhetorical effect. Then, as the final part of the interaction, they presented audience members with a compilation of their analysis statements in a graphically designed textual document. These teens thus staged a "rivaling" event aimed at increasing understanding and promoting more just and beneficial community interaction.

Results of rivaling at the CLC created an experience beyond what many thought possible: more dialogue in the community between concerned parties, more understanding among stakeholders, more volunteers for workshops, and increasingly sophisticated rhetorical knowledge for the participating teens. Assuming that the enactment of diverse perspectives at this site was as effective as these outcomes seemed to suggest, I determined rivaling was a method by which I too could seek "radical alternatives" (Flower, 2003, p. 50) and use difference intentionally. Utilizing rivaling as a method in Native and non-Native exchange was a way to "elicit real differences without polarizing people and to negotiate conflict without silencing it" (p. 64). The rivaling process exposed participants to contexts of difference, to radical innovation based on community-driven need (see also Key, 2002; Fishman, Lunsford, McGregor, & Otuteye, 2005). Glynda Hull and Mark Nelson (2005) call a similar process "braiding" (p. 225), and David Quijada (2009) describes it as utilizing

"conversational contexts," or forging intercultural alliances across difference, asserting it is a mix that can coexist simultaneously. In making this decision I hoped for results similar to those the CLC experienced. I was hoping for "more life," as Lyons says.

Dialogic/Practical Hermeneutics

Melissa Freeman (2006, 2007) conducted focus group sessions on the topic of New York State's standardized testing with parents from communities adjacent to her school site. Instead of looking solely at responses as categorized by theme, Freeman looked at moments of dialogue where meaning was "coconstructed in the interaction itself" (2006, p. 83). These moments provided data for additional or "third" interviews and ongoing analysis. In a process similar to the way Flower's students scripted a performance to encourage dialogue, Freeman (2007) culled excerpts from first and second interview transcripts, scripted them in poetic stanza form, and then presented them to her participants to draw out additional reflection and to encourage further engagement.[22] In these additional, follow-up interviews, Freeman allowed time for reading, thinking, and responding. Taken together the responses constituted participatory interpretation, and the action of participatory interpretation became the mode through which Freeman created meaning and significance from her data. Freeman's ideas concerning the efficacy of a) participants engaging together with texts and b) poetic transcription providing the catalyst for a "third interview" (Seidman, 1998) further informed my decisions regarding rivaling as a method.

Poetic transcription such as that employed by Freeman (2007) taught me to utilize a scripted form through which values and concerns can be expressed. The transcript contextualizes and focuses values and concerns in a way that "pulls people out of their

[22] For other examples of scripted transcripts see Gee, 1996 and Wortham, 2001, 2006.

performative selves" (p. 90) and helps them cultivate a more critical response. The script thus becomes a catalyst for negotiation and dialogue. At the same time that participants are led toward criticality, they are drawn to deeper reflection by the "close at home" details, so that the final product reflects their role as "spectators" in a joint performance (p. 90). During focus group sessions, for example, Freeman's participants seemed to first coconstruct a consensus driven defense of the site's teachers, programs, and practices, this "despite its less-then-average performance" (p. 90). After constructing a defensive consensus, however, the dialogue became more fluid. At that point, participants "share[d] their experience around a topic," as they worked to clarify further meanings (p. 90). They began a more critical interpretive process, in other words, using "stories as evidence of their thinking" (p. 91). Like Deloria, Freeman (2006) notes that responding to a common, shared interest in a textual form facilitates collectivist—or, in the case of this research, communitist—responses rather than solely individualistic ones.

Discrepant Communities and Willing Interpretation

It now becomes necessary to say something about interpretation as a critical force in this dissertation. As the previous paragraphs suggest, rivaling as a meaning-making activity has attendant interpretive or hermeneutic components. Hermeneutics, as used and understood here, is the theory of textual interpretation essential to human understanding. Hermeneutics is not, strictly speaking, a method. Rather, Hans Georg Gadamer (1998) defines it as a process by which interlocutors negotiate the ongoing interplay of differing and often conflicting positions and their representations. As such, I saw that hermeneutics could provide a mediating spot between participants in this research, a tangent point, if you will, from which to negotiate understandings. According to the *Hermeneutics Reader*,

> If we place ourselves in the situation of someone else . . . then we shall understand him [sic]. . . . This placing of ourselves is not the empathy of one individual for another, nor is it the application to another person of our own criteria, but it always involves the attainment of a higher universality that overcomes, not only our own particularity, but also that of the other. The concept of the 'horizon' suggests itself because it expresses the wide, superior vision that the person who is seeking to understand must have. To acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand—not in order to look away from it, but to see it better within a larger whole and in truer proportion. (Gadamer, 1985, p. 271)

Hermeneutics prioritizes recursive, intersubjective, and/or contextual modes of knowing and understanding. Through lived experiences, it suggests, people come to belong to particular linguistic communities and to participate in particular histories or traditions. The fact of belonging and participating helps structure the way humans are socialized to make judgments; indeed, it teaches people ways to (pre)judge. Prejudgments (prejudices) lead to conceptions of history that are made available through conscious articulations of prior understandings in language. Prejudice is "the fundamental historical reality of being—an 'ontological given' of lived experience—that is so much a part of us, of how we think, speak and act, that it is not entirely transparent or open to reflection" (Gardiner, 1992, p. 111).

However, because language and multisensory elements are often present in interpretive experience, they allow prior understandings (prejudices) to be exposed and be made more available for interrogation. As it relates to participant understandings of academic presence and performance in this dissertation, prehistory shaped participant knowledge and understanding. When these rose to the point of articulation, they became available for questioning. Participants' willingness to bring their historical consciousness along to the conversational and/or textual exchanges allowed us to find our shared tangent points and to rival the hard things: history, racially shaped experience, and interpretive strategies. When participants engaged in conversation across difference, whether individually or in groups, they participated in a "circularity of interpretation" that allowed them to

experience productive resonance alongside conflict and dissonance (Kinsella, 2006, par. 16). Hermeneutics thus allowed me to see how embracing tension could open participants up to imagination and possibility and could provide a space between/within where dissonance and resonance might be brought into dialogue.

As Gadamer's interplay of language and tradition is important to this dissertation, so too is Ricoeur's (1995) "historicity," a term used to indicate the "fundamental and radical fact that we make history, that we are immersed in history, that we are historical beings" (p. 11). History, says Ricoeur, is language and tradition because it is "both a literary artifact . . . and a representation of reality" (p. 12). However, linguistic modes and representations—simulations, to use Vizenor's term—are only accepted and continued if they are effectively communicated to and/or interpreted by others who then validate or reject them through (mis)understanding. In academic institutions today, language and written texts constitute "the primary object[s] of interpretation" (Kaplan, 2003, p. 20), and so these become the primary means through which audiences construct historic understanding. The problem is they typically sustain and privilege understanding of EuroWestern and AngloAmerican heritages and traditions rather than Indigenous ones.

Traditions, as defined by Ricoeur (1974b), arise when cultural content is "transmitted by a specific authority, the authority of the past" (p. 246). This applies not just to anyone's past, but as previously stated, to a particular, dominant past. Under Ricoeur's definition, then, the word tradition "loses all neutrality" (p. 246). It becomes ideology and presents a clear possibility of further becoming an instrument of coercion. An ideology of coercion becomes apparent when we consider whose presence, which modes of expression, and which performances, are more highly valued, approved, and encouraged in academic settings. If we remember Lyons' (2010) argument, however, we will see this does not

necessarily impinge upon possibility. In a similar way, Elizabeth Kinsella (2006), credits Jardine (1999) for demonstrating that "an *interest* in tradition and ancestry does not [necessarily] require the *repetition* of traditions" (par. 37, emphasis added). Kinsella states, "We begin from a context that cannot be denied. We cannot escape our history; however, the possibility of transcending our context does exist," and she then offers Sherwin's (1988) argument for "a way between" (par. 38).

To summarize, the methodologies of this research help participants and readers to experience the socioaccupuncture required of relearning and relistening, practicing reflexivity, thinking about separate and shared histories, and ultimately paying attention through rivaling interpretations. I see rivaling as a form of intercultural dialogue that offers participants a space and place where "diversely situated knowledges [can come] into play" (Flower, 2003, p. 56). In this space, when representations rise "to the level of articulation," we begin to "glimpse one another's divergent contexts for interpretation, alternative images of . . . motives, and contradictory visions of outcomes" (p. 56). Whereas dialogue in a Gadamerian sense indicates interested people who willingly participate across theoretical and/or cultural traditions to create consensus (a "fusion of horizons"), rivaling brings dissent or disensus to the fore.

Rivaling, in a Ricoeurian sense, acknowledges that dialogue between participants of unequal status constitutes "the place par excellence of distortions and alienations . . . the regulative idea" (Ricoeur, 1974b, p. 248). I thus appreciate why Native participants might be wary of forging alliances with EuroWestern or AngloAmerican communities or persons conducting and participating in research such as the one undertaken here. They come from disparate and unequal positions of power. In this circumstance, alliance through dialogue might be interpreted less as Powell would like and more as an attempt at fusion, which might

also signal coercion toward assimilation. The important thing to realize here is that dialogue, even that undertaken as Freeman's research suggests, cannot be achieved at the expense of "ignoring important differences" (Wallace, 1995, p. 1), and one important difference is the oppression and marginalization certain communities have experienced.

Experiences in this dissertation, then, are understood at the point of intersecting consciousness (when we come to *know* together), but understanding more particularly occurs at the point of critical, interpretive action, when we come together to *do* something. That doing is enacted in rivaling. In this way, differences and tensions can be mediated by method in an ongoing process. This is an argument not for fusion that would merge or assimilate disparities but for recognition that multiple and varied positions can posit "legitimate claim[s]" (cited in Kaplan, 2003, p. 37). Interpretation thereby maintains "buoyancy," to use David Linge's (1976) term, between a plurality of standpoints (viii) rather than becoming static or fixed. In this project, rivaling opened up the creases/cracks in understanding, in the local and historical spaces between humans, texts, and artifacts when they were brought together in ongoing interpretive relationship.

Interchapter 3 emphasizes the intercultural nature of rivaling, wherein an interested non-Native participant willingly reaches across disparate traditions to recognize the oppressions and marginalization experienced by Native communities. In this interchapter, the participant moves from internal understanding toward critical, interpretive action. The result is a buoyant rivaling of separation and identity.

Interchapter 3: Nicia's Reflections on Separation and Identity

> I have been thinking about what separates American Indian (AI) students and their white professors. First I think it is the burden of history that I mentioned during the session. Each time individuals in these two cultures interact I believe they have to engage in constant negotiation, renegotiation, evaluation and re-evaluation of their values and history (social, cultural, and personal) that help significantly define who

they are. Identity is an exhausting and fearful thing to redefine, especially when dealing with such a sensitive issue as race. No one wants to renegotiate their identity unless they really have to. For white professors (or professors teaching and adhering to white dominant discourse) I think they feel they can escape the pain of identity renegotiation by citing university policy or culture.

What I mean is that the professor (or the white/dominant discourse person) does not have to experience the pain and discomfort of an inter-racial interaction because they take refuge in the institution. They do this by citing phrases like "well, that's the way we teach/do things here" or they feel "I don't have to adapt. The university is this certain way, and I am this certain way, by default others should be this way." This is how I interpret the phrase "institutionalized racism." Somehow, the white person can remove themselves [sic] from responsibility by trusting in a faceless being "the institution," which is the collection of codified traditions, rules and beliefs.

To do this does not at all undermine their identity, sense of ethics, or integrity in anyway [sic]. They are part of the institution, but they are not the institution. So, the institution can take the blame and deal with the problem. However, since the institution is not a person but a faceless, intangible entity, the American Indian student has nowhere to go or no one to talk to in order to negotiate a problem. In a sense, the AI students are pushed off and referred to "the institution," but the institution has no voice so it can't answer back. The AI student is, then, left out in the cold.

In this interaction, the white person takes refuge and removes him or herself from the racial negotiation process. However, the AI student has nowhere to take refuge because they are not allowed in the "institution" and there is not a place they belong to that the institute acknowledges that can act as a powerful balance. In the end, only one person (re)negotiates and (re)evaluates: the AI student.

This may involve the definition of identity. We mentioned in the rivaling session this question: "Can identities be put on and taken off?" I would say yes, and in the context of the above theory, I say that the (white/dominant discourse) professor can put on an institutional identity and take it off when the workday is over. This makes me think of the transcript in the rivaling session last week when the professor was angry that he/she was called at home on a Sunday to deal with a scholastic matter: the professor could divorce his/her identity at school (in the workplace) from the home identity.

I do not know if all cultures, specifically AI cultures, would agree that this "putting on and taking off" of identities is possible. This difference (if it exists; I do not attempt to deny that this is only a germ of an idea for which I have no outside evidence—I only just began to consider it) may be another barrier to communication between AI students and white/dominant discourse professors.

CHAPTER 4

DATA GATHERING PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Two years of experiences with research participants informed the construction of this study. These experiences included observation and engagement in academic teaching and mentoring sessions, writing tutorials, and conferencing sessions with AITE students. Additionally, I was present during student, faculty, staff, and administrator interactions and meetings. During this time, I kept research logs, wrote descriptive field notes, engaged in informal conversations, and encountered numerous and varied textual documents such as letters, emails, syllabi, assignment descriptions, and course work. At the same time, I was exposed to information relevant to the larger local context within which the AITE program was framed.[23] I participated in community meetings and gatherings. I read articles from newspapers like *The Navajo Times*. I paid attention as well to public exchanges of conversations, interactions, and speeches.

After my research assistantship ended and AITE was dissolved, I began reflecting on my initial logs and notes. I thought about the miscommunications that had occurred. I contemplated underlying reasons for participants talking past or around one another or refusing to engage at all. Deliberating on what I knew from Indigenous scholarship, what I learned through my observations and experiences, and what others in AITE had related as

[23] See Lemke, 2000, for his discussion of the importance of considering historical context in cross-timescale relations.

personal observations and experiences, I wondered whether lack of understanding and respect for self-determination or sovereignty was responsible for discrepancies concerning presence and performance at the research site. I wondered if there was a way—a method—I could use to facilitate more productive interactions, one that could result in increased understanding. From these initial reflections and musings, I sketched out ideas and began to create and design the study and to draft introductory research questions. I knew I needed to understand something about participants' background, community experience, previous schooled experiences, memories of learning and being taught, and languages spoken. I also needed to ask participants to discuss what I felt were key concepts and to ask them in such a way that they would feel comfortable responding. Finally, I needed to ask if, how, and why participants might apply those definitions to their university and AITE experiences.

These musings resulted in a set of individual interview questions and then in a set of group interview questions (see Appendices A, B, and C). Having solidified the study proposal and having obtained Institutional Review Board approval, I then wrote emails or delivered letters inviting people to participate in the project (see Appendices D, E, and F). I followed up on the initial invitation to answer any questions posed by invitees (usually via email) and to send consent forms to those who agreed to participate (Appendix G). After collecting the signed consent forms, I was ready to begin the formal data gathering process.

Just as initial reflections provided valuable benchmarks pointing toward tensions concerning sovereignty, and just as the process of observing and recording those tensions pointed toward the importance of paying attention to key concepts in interactional exchanges, so using a similar reflective/interpretive process for the duration of the project solicited similar data but in a more sharply focused way. Then, too, paying focused attention in a multisensory way also provided more sharply focused data. Data gathered during

interviews and rivaling sessions were digitally captured on film, which afforded access to gestures, speech, sound, movement, silence, and looks. Each interview provided additional experiences to consider and interactional moments to bring to the next interviews and to the rivaling sessions. Cyclically, then, these interviews and sessions facilitated further reflections and interpretations concerning discrepant notions of presence and performance for Native and non-Native participants. Data also included notes, emails, conversations, and dialogue captured via social networking sites. Taken together, the constructions and reconstructions of data built a collage of participant exchanges: their theoretical and pedagogical stances, definitions, expectations, reactions to these expectations, responses, and reactions to these responses.

Early on, I saw that the process could take a good length of time to accomplish. I therefore tried to make the process more manageable by constructing and working through stages of data gathering occurring Spring 2009 through Spring 2011. The purpose of constructing this admittedly and intentionally complex process was to encourage multiple and ongoing interactions, and to allow interactive exchanges to unfold in such a way that participants could identify, describe, and interpret with greater clarity. The process allowed participants to confirm, dismiss, or complicate patterns that arose in one data source by looking at other sources of data (see triangulation as found in Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Maxwell, 2005). In all, the process of building upon our shared points of concern and then moving toward rivaling of those points provided multiple ways of understanding and evaluating "what was going on" with regard to presence and performance. Ultimately, it shed light on integration/survivance as well as separation/rhetorical sovereignty. Gathering data in this way helped me to organize and, in the end, answer the questions my initial reflections

allowed me to pose. With this in mind, I now turn to an explanation of how I worked through the five stages of data gathering.

Five Stages of Data Gathering

During stage one, I scheduled and conducted 24 individual interviews. The number included seven students who participated in the AITE program, four graduate research assistants, three graduate mentors, one faculty member, three media writers, three Native students who were not AITE participants, and three writing center personnel. Prior to meeting in the structured format, I sent individual participants the set of open-ended questions that would guide the interview via email. Doing so helped them know what to expect and feel more at ease and prepared for dialogue and/or interpretation. As part of preparation, I encouraged participants to think through preliminary answers to the questions and write responses on the interview protocol sheet. Few completed a written response; but, as evidenced by their responses, most read and thought about the questions before entering the interview space.

All interviews were semistructured formal interviews and all were digitally recorded. Some recordings were in audio format only, as per participant choice, while others were recorded in both audio and visual formats, also as per participant choice. Some participants gave consent for using all aspects of audiovisual recordings, whether for public viewing (as at a conference presentation) or more private viewing (during follow up individual or group interviews). Some, while agreeing to be recorded, nevertheless requested that, if these recordings were made public, their identities would be protected by distortion in image and/or voice.

Most interviews lasted approximately 1.5 hours, although some were considerably longer and some shorter. The places and times where interviews took place were arranged to

accommodate privacy and participants' convenience. I initially suggested days and times that worked for me, and we negotiated from there. Most interviews occurred in a secluded spot or room on the university campus, but some occurred in homes of participants.

After meeting at the agreed-upon time and place, participants engaged in small talk while I set up recording equipment, typically a Flip Video camera or an iPhone with a QuickVoicePro application. Once we began the actual interview, protocol questions gave us a base from which to begin, but our conversational interactions were not limited to these. Nor did we strictly follow the order of the approximately 20 questions listed in the protocol document. Rather, the interview moved from subject to subject and question to question as the on-going conversation warranted. In this way, interviewees participated in guiding the interview, highlighting salient concepts according to their own experiences, as per protocol published by the U.S. Office for Human Research Protection.

This protocol is typically emphasized for narratives of oral history interviews, but given the criticality of storying participant exchanges I felt it also applied here. The protocol emphasizes that those selected for interviewing are chosen because of their "often-unique relationship to the topic at hand" and the interviews are "tailored to the experiences of the individual narrator." The protocol gives this rationale:

> Although interviews are guided by professional protocols, the way any individual interview unfolds simply cannot be predicted. An interview gives a unique perspective on the topic at hand; a series of interviews offers up not similar 'generalizable' information but a variety of particular perspectives on the topic. (Ritchie & Shopes, 2005)

We therefore engaged the specific protocol questions, but we also engaged similar types of questions as they became relevant to individual experiences. As interviews came to a close, I always left time for participants to tell me or ask me anything they thought was important that we had not yet covered.

In stage two, I applied the same procedures and patterns used in stage one as we worked through the data gathering process for the group interviews. During stage two, I conducted 13 different group interviews. Each group interview occurred with a varied number of representatives from different participant subsets: one with graduate mentors, four with AITE students, two with graduate research assistants, two with faculty members, one with media writers, and three with writing center personnel.

After completing group interviews, I proceeded to stage three, which was mostly about transcription. During this stage, I transcribed individual and group interviews word for word. While transcription is time and labor intensive, I chose this route so that I could fully immerse myself in the interview data. It was during this immersion in the transcription data that I began a first-level analysis through marginal and in-text annotation. Completing the transcription process myself also added another layer of identity protection or confidentiality to the process, something I had chosen to include as part of the Institutional Review Board document.

After completing transcription, I saved one clean master copy of every interview document to a file on my password-protected home computer. Upon saving a master document, I sent copies of individual or group transcripts via email to individual or group interviewees for response. At this time, I asked interviewees for feedback, additional thoughts, comments, and interpretations. This step comprised, in Freeman's terms, a second interview.

Once I gathered the transcription feedback and response data, I began the fourth stage processes of color-coding and organizing transcripts for analysis. Here it is important to note that data analysis did not follow a traditional qualitative design, and data were not selected and highlighted according to traditional coding schemes as they are in emergent,

grounded theory designs. Rather, color-coding was intuitive based on the dissertation's key concepts, namely, presence, performance, survivance/integration, and rhetorical sovereignty/separation, and community. Selecting and highlighting data in this way better served community investment in the project, in that how an audience reads/interprets the study when like-data are juxtaposed becomes more important than how data were originally selected as a conceptual category alone.

After color coding by concept, I attempted to organize by copying and pasting excerpts from the original interview transcripts into computer files according to foundational concepts. The idea was that one file would contain participant mentions of performance, for instance. Another file would contain information about survivance, another about rhetorical sovereignty, and so on. From attempting to complete the exercise of coding and organizing by concept, I learned first hand (as noted in Chapter 2) the ways in which they were not discrete but were instead relational and overlapping. At that point, I learned much about acknowledging conceptual relationship as opposed to systematicity, compartmentalization, and division.

Let me illustrate conceptual relationship by placing three brief stories of presence and performance from participant interview transcripts next to one another. Presence and performance in these excerpts are integrally connected. One concept informs the other. One concept is discussed in relation to the other. Paying attention to the overlap, we learn that if Natives are both seen and heard in public debate, as the first excerpt suggests, they can influence the way policy is performed. In a similar manner, the second excerpt suggests that the way Natives are seen influences the way they are expected to perform. In the third excerpt, a participant suggests that being seen as an American Indian who performed well in an educational capacity can enhance the possibility of productive change in the community.

- Decisions are made for those who get involved. And if we're not seen and we're not heard, then, in a sense, we're . . . our voices don't lend any, ah, validity, once a decision is made. So, something is voted upon, and it's too late. Then they just tell us about it. "You should have come to the meeting." Or, "You should have been more educated on this subject." In our society it takes a piece of paper to say you're valid.

- There are ways to reach out to our kids and let them know that [Natives are] there**.** I know that it's more comforting to know that someone of your own background is there and can communicate better. I've noticed that in the students at the school I'm at . . . [They] like to joke with me, say hi to me in the hallways. Even though teachers have different opinions of them, as being real shy, not very outspoken, kind of lost in the crowd because they're so quiet. But I see a different individual. I see someone who has the capacity to do well, the capability to succeed as well, whereas in the eyes of certain educators, they just see a shy person. I see much more than that.

- I don't think I'm gonna go back [to my home community] and make the change so much as I'm going to go back and be a person that's there that represents somebody who went out and did it. I can lend a hand, but I can't go in and force change to happen, other than just being somebody present who boosted it.

Yet another story illustrates the idea of conceptual relationality. In this excerpt from a participant interview, the idea of curriculum becomes related to teacher performance, which in turn overlaps with the way participant experience is overlooked and creates absence as opposed to presence. The participant discusses curriculum in the context of teacher performance and (without explicitly stating it) describes how together they erased "minority" (AITE and other) student presence and performance. The transcript reads as follows:

> Professors have their agendas and they have their way, their curriculum, is what I'm trying to say, and I found that a lot of it was just regurgitation. You're just going through the motion. And did I really learn anything? Sure, I learned some things, but I felt like I left the school *empty* still, like there was still more training that I needed. And I think a lot of that is based upon maybe my age because I was older. I have children. I've already worked and volunteered in and been involved in communities, and projects and such, and been active in those areas. To come to a school where the professors are so disciplined in their own way, their own area of study, they tend not to have the whole picture of what society is like.
>
> So, what I mean by leaving here empty is that, being a minority person, it just wasn't addressed very well at all. What? You have (shrugs shoulders) two hours to talk about the Black culture, the Asian culture—on different days, of course—but how can you learn about cultures in such a short amount of time?

> It really did a lot of injustice, I think, because (shakes head) those students who haven't experienced those cultures went away, I think, more confused than anything, or more fearful than anything: "What can I do? How should I greet the person? How should I communicate?" So that's why I say my age probably played a factor in that, in leaving the university a little empty as far as multicultural education is concerned.

When I followed up by asking for more specifics, the response was that while some professors enjoyed students bringing "a different perspective" to class, "a good 80% of them" did not. They were so "entrenched in their own discipline that there wasn't much room for other things, for new perspectives to come in." The participant notes that instructors "have certain expectations," and "want us to be prepared, follow their readings." There just "wasn't much bend or flexibility." These instructors "did not know how to help," and if *they* did not know, the participant says, "where do I go then, in the university, for help?" Instructors additionally did not acknowledge difference, in this case Indigenous difference. They "treated everyone the same." It was not that the participant expected "preferential treatment or anything like that." It's just that the "curriculum was pretty narrow, narrow-minded."

The excerpt points to ways in which competencies the participant brought to the classroom were unacknowledged. Community experiences that could have enriched the classroom curriculum were left unexplored. Curriculum devoted to discussing "minority" issues was at best under-developed. Consequently, the AITE participant left the university "a little empty" as far as necessary training, and other students left unprepared to teach and interact in today's "multicultural" society. These excerpted phrases point to conceptual overlap. They also illustrate instructors' lack of understanding regarding the need to adjust canon and curriculum to suit the needs of Indigenous students.

Another data-organizing strategy was to identify moments of tension and or moments of meaningful exchange that arose during individual and group interviews. These

moments became apparent upon multiple re-readings of transcripts, which brought to light exchanges that "create[d] dissonance, spark[ed] the imagination, or rais[ed] confusion" (Freeman, 2007, p. 934). I marked these types of passages for future discussion during additional interviews and rivaling sessions. Several participants in separate interviews, for example, talked about the same tension-filled exchanges. They indicated these exchanges were troubling performances whereby the meaning of Native presence in the classroom was questioned and negotiated. One of these I labeled, "The Eye Rollers," and this incident is used to illustrate how rivaling is textually accomplished in Interchapter 4. Another exchange I labeled "Norming the Norm." Chapter 5 culminates in an analysis of this exchange, which created dissonance, sparked imagination, and raised confusion. The Norming the Norm exchange relates to the participant's assertion in the previous paragraph that instructors did not want or know "how to help." I specifically chose this exchange because from amongst the many transcribed and marked it most directly related to canon, curriculum, and pedagogy, in other words, to rhetorical sovereignty. It led participants to ask questions about respect and responsibility, especially as these relate to self-determination through self-education.

Rivaling sessions commenced during the fifth stage of data gathering. During this stage, I used the copy and paste function in my computer word processing program to excerpt marked passages of meaningful exchange from original transcripts and transpose them into new documents. Once in the new document, I arranged the excerpts into either poetic stanza or dialogue form. At this point, identifying features were removed and participants were either given pseudonyms or were marked by identifying numbers (Faculty 1, Faculty 2, and Faculty 3). These new documents formed the textual basis for rivaling. After deciding which excerpts were most salient for a particular session, based on who

would be attending and what concepts we would be discussing, I began scheduling and conducting the sessions. Three rivaling sessions occurred with AITE students, one session with graduate mentors, one with graduate research assistants, two with faculty members, and three with writing center personnel for a total of ten rivaling sessions. Again, all sessions were digitally recorded.

Most rivaling sessions consisted of participants working with me in small groups. Gathering data in small group settings rather than individual ones was, in the main, considered more in tune with many Native participants' worldviews (see Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Meyer, 2001a, 2001b; Kanaʻiaupuni, 2004). When requested, however, interviews or rivaling sessions did occur between a sole individual participant and me. Again, in an Indigenous epistemological sense, knowledge is arrived at through relationship; therefore, respecting participants' wishes and being a trustworthy recipient of information was imperative. During group interviews, each person in the group was given a copy of the same text(s) to read. In the case of rivaling a videotaped interview, all participants viewed the videotape together. Dialoguing together (whether individually or in groups), we worked through the processes of creating, reading, listening, responding to, storying, (re)storying, interpreting, and (re)interpreting documents. Rivaling, whether one-with-one or one-with-group, was a way to enact the techniques promoted by Deloria, Flower, and Freeman.

Reflections on Data Gathering

The techniques used in this research turned a spotlight not only on original interview texts but also the ensuing tensions arising from multiple participants responding to datum as it occurred in moments of exchange. These were tensions that then required additional rivaling. The process was repeated a number of times: recorded interviews, transcription of

interviews, interviewee responses, color coding of concepts, identifying moments of tension or meaningful exchange, creating new document collages, and rivaling the new documents. The exact number of times the process occurred varied with different data, objectives, and participants. Indeed, the process could still be continuing, had I not determined that data accrued to this point were substantial, rich, and ready for analysis.

Juxtaposing the texts of subsequent participant exchanges in dialogue form or in stanzas allowed meaning making to occur in a way that was not possible using descriptive field notes or individual transcripts alone. The rivaling or third interview technique accounted for perspectives arising specifically from intercultural exchanges, from "what happens in the space where the reader meets text or the listener meets the speaker . . . to create more empowering interpretations from which to act" (Freeman, 2007, p. 926). Rivaling with the third interview assisted the research in terms of reflexivity, the Rs of Indigenous research (including deep, multisensory listening), and negotiating community norms. It was a way to enact situated knowledges as "a by-product of dialogue, or of something exchanged with others" (Meyer, 2001, p. 134). It reminded us of our shared interest in the topic and, above all, reminded us that a willing and humble stance was required to allow this project to go forward: a willingness to be open and vulnerable plus a humility that allowed participants to recognize that others had something to say and to teach. Through rivaling we sought to locate and negotiate epistemological differences that caused dissonance between groups. Participants rivaled (inter)textual sources—actions as well as artifacts—and attempted to talk across that difference for the purpose of interpretation or meaning making.

In using this method, I was interested in possibility and productive movement. I was, to use Vizenor's term, interested in transmotion within a particular context. Here, the

context was American Indian education at the intersection of the AITE and the University. While the theoretical frameworks utilized in this project worked to illuminate "history" and the "racially shaped" experience of participants (Flower, 2003, p. 55), the methodological frameworks and methods critically highlighted Indigenous epistemologies and interpretive strategies. Engaging dialogic/practical and critical hermeneutics allowed me to gather valuable data at the same time that it created a possibility for broader epistemological shift. Using rivaling as a research method in this dissertation helped participants collaborate to bring to light knowledge not previously expressed. Additionally, authentic stakeholders—participants directly affected and influenced by the project—debated and determined its value, what was appropriate, and how it should be used and interpreted. Rivaling enabled purposeful, innovative responses to community-assessed need. Rivaling helped us work toward the practical purpose of creating understanding that we hoped would, in turn, improve the educational experience for American Indian students in the future.

A question arose as I was thinking about the rivaling that occurred in Pittsburgh's CLC. I wondered whether it was possible to say that participants there enacted rhetorical sovereignty. After all, their goal was to effect change in the rhetorical material (canon) used as evidence for decisions and actions (curriculum) in the community. In goal, mode, style, and language, they deliberately enacted self-determination toward the end goal of self-education and community benefit. However, they were not American Indians nor were they a part of any Indigenous community. I was led, therefore, to ask whether anyone—the (post)colonially oppressed as well as the historically privileged—could enact rhetorical sovereignty? Would using the term to reference the actions of non-Natives—working class White students, for instance—be beneficial or would it be an unethical appropriation, like wearing a headdress one has not earned, like validating a "sweat lodge" created and run by a

non-Native? As a writing instructor and mentor, I can see advantages to having broad explanatory access to the term. However, as I have written elsewhere in this document, sovereignty—even rhetorical sovereignty—has a different meaning in an Indigenous context than it has anywhere else. Lyons (2000) asserts that rhetorical sovereignty requires "above all the presence of an Indian voice . . . setting at least some of the terms of debate" (p. 462). This is a question, therefore, I hope to pursue in greater depth in the future.

Challenges and Limitations

As I write this chapter, I realize the very act of condensing and organizing this research process for the purpose of communicating clearly with an audience has made the process sound relatively streamlined and easy. It was not. Having interacted with one another formally and informally during years of discussions, seminars, meetings, workshops, and individual tutorials, I anticipated that participants would be familiar enough with one another and me that they would be willing to open themselves to the theories, methods, and processes described in this document. I thought they would be eager to be highly involved and engaged with research data. In reality, some were and some were not. Negotiating reflexivity, community expectations, and CIRM was a complex task, one made more complicated because data were intersubjective, participant creations. Everyone working on this project was a creator and an interpreter. Everyone contributed to the end result of this document. This meant everyone was valuable and everyone was vulnerable. The process was subject to participant resistance and avoidance. It was subject to attempts to smooth things over, take sides, and/or justify actions.

Additionally, while I anticipated the need to overcome some of the difficulties alluded to here as a precursor to undertaking the research, and while I realized I would need to invite participants in a compelling and persuasive manner (knowing some would decline),

I did not foresee some of the challenges that would arise after agreeing to participate. One of these was achieving enough "buy-in" from participants to fully experience the interviewing and rivaling cycles. The participants were busy people and sometimes life got in the way. Some lost interest and energy. Some had experience with AITE before 2006 (when I was hired). Some were reticent to discuss troublesome issues of the past. Some were also employees of the university, and my sense was they were reluctant to confront rhetorical tensions for fear of negative repercussions, whether psychological, social, or material. Some participants had additional concerns about being recognized should the data become part of a publishable document and/or be used in a public forum. For these reasons, participation was construed as a risky venture. By the same token, these same students, mentors, staff, and faculty members had a stake in the ways their presences and performances were interpreted. Absence (declining to be present through participation) was thus as much a performance as participatory presence, worthy of rivaling in and of itself, and certainly worthy of interpretation, perhaps at a future date. It is also important to note that my historic knowledge of the program is incomplete in some senses, and is largely constructed from the information participants were willing to share.

Another challenge arose mainly due to an increasingly geographically dispersed participant population. To get around this difficulty and as part of material support, I had planned to assist with transportation as participants traveled to and from the research site for interviews. In most instances, I traveled to them instead, physically or virtually. Utilizing technology such as email, text messaging, and interactive media mitigated this difficulty. Participants could preview and discuss segments of data, scripts, and images via email, texting, and interactive media. In fact, because this study utilized multiple styles and modalities as part of its process, it overcame some of the physical limitations and even

presented the possibility of focusing specifically on the affordances of multimodal interaction. This aspect of the process might contribute an additional piece of extended research in the future.

Ultimately, the success or failure of this project or future projects or programs rests primarily on whether Native participants feel it has benefit to them as individuals and their tribal communities as sovereign nations. Secondarily, success is determined by whether this project is perceived as beneficial to the larger scholarly community, whether they truly listen and understand when participants express sentiments along the order of university students who, Pratt (2002) tells us, had begun to clamor to be recognized as present and performing, saying "I don't just want you to let me be here, I want to belong here; this institution should belong to me as much as it does to anyone else" (p. 15). That the clamor is as adamant now as it was then evidences a continuing and pressing need to re-learn and re-listen.[24]

Confidentiality

All data were gathered on audiovisual equipment belonging to me. After gathering, they were downloaded and stored in a password-protected computer at my home. I alone had access to documents and data, and I was solely responsible for transcribing data. I assumed some participants would drop out before completing all stages of this project. I determined that should this happen I would shred all written documents, delete all computerized data, and erase all video or audiotapes solely associated with those non-completing participants. No participants dropped out of the study.

As participants welcomed me into their lives, both in and out of the academic environment, they led me to interrogate what it meant to have reciprocal responsibility: for

[24] It is telling that the theme of the 2012 AERA conference, "*Non Satis Scire*: To Know is Not Enough," should corroborate this point at this time in educational history.

one another, for the events of the research, and for its after affects, including ongoing commitment to relationship in both short- and long-term ways. A primary responsibility was protecting privacy and the integrity of the research. I tried to be especially cognizant of privacy when speaking about or quoting participants, sometimes masking gender and position in order to do so. Because of the semipublic nature of rivaling, however, I could not fully guarantee participant confidentiality. The necessity of presenting rivaling materials in a group format for collaborative interpretation, for example, brought complete confidentiality into question.

The possibility of presenting analysis alongside rivaling examples in later publications and/or conference presentations was an additional concern because it meant that pieces of data gathered during this research could become public. I therefore took care to make sure participants understood these confidentiality qualifiers, and it is important to note that permission to use data materials during rivaling materials and in this document has been granted by participants. Participants were given opportunity to express their preferences for the degree of use I could make of data concerning them on the participant consent form. Every possible effort was made to keep information confidential, i.e., participants were provided with pseudonyms and great care was taken to remove, as much as possible, identifying data in this document. These measures will also apply should there be public dissemination of this document or portions of this document in the future.

Early on, in creating the study, I anticipated enacting reciprocity and commitment through co-creating written documents for conferences and possible publications, sharing credit should any texts or presentations follow this dissertation. Another was continuing to offer my expertise as writing tutor and mentor as well as providing emotional and material support when needed. As the research proceeded and participant vulnerability became even

more apparent, I realized that participants' existing personal and professional relationships might be negatively affected by overtly participating in my research. This caused me to rethink even the act of asking or suggesting that participants coauthor documents or present collaboratively in the future. Once again, I had to rethink the power constructs at play in that assumption. It is unfortunate but understandable that we must be so covert about these research relationships and that anonymity should be a condition of the power relationships associated with research participation, but that is the condition under which we currently work. It is a limitation of the act of rivaling.

It is tricky interacting in the spaces between survivance/integration and rhetorical sovereignty/separation, although many participants navigated it beautifully. In teasing that space out, research tends to dwell on the difficulties. This is understandable: in the conflict is the question. But as one participant wrote in a quick email, "I was thinking as I was driving home that even though there were numerous bumps in the road for [AITE], I think it reflected many successes. I am just hoping that the way my words were expressed didn't indicate that there was significant failure. . . .Thanks again for allowing me to participate." Thus, despite the challenges, despite the socioaccupuncture that occasionally stung, I am confident this project highlights its participants' presences and performances in significant and actionable ways.

Interchapter 4: The Eye Rollers

Dialogic Excerpt from First Interview (Individual)

Anne: I guess it's a thing where I don't like to sit in the front row. Before, they've mentioned, "Sit in the front." But I feel that's just not the place for me. For some students it is, but it's not for me. Usually I sit halfway or maybe 3/4ths of the way back. Sometimes in the back row, but I don't usually sit in the back row. I have seen my peers, not my peers in the cohort but my Caucasian peers, . . . and I have seen it in every class. This is the reason I do not ask questions.

Or if it's a question that I have in mind and somebody asks it, I see my peers roll their eyes or like it's the stupidest question that could be asked. And so I think if I find out myself then even better. Do you understand what I'm saying? . . . And so I see these eyes roll of my peers and I say, "Why ask the question?" I'm one of those students. And I see that in my own classrooms.

Dialogic Excerpt from First Interview (Group)

Dana: So, I remember talking about that. I know that I was nervous, because . . . there were two girls that were in that class that were also in other classes that we had. And they were both girls who (looks at Connie) . . .

Connie: // The eye rollers. //

Dana: They rolled their eyes at us when we asked our question. I mean, they get annoyed with us. And they'll turn to each other and it's so obvious. . . . Like, I didn't really want to tell them as much as I would have in another setting because I knew the attitude of those two girls and I knew how they thought of us. I didn't really want to share as much, but I remember I was a little nervous sharing *that* much, cause I was afraid that—not afraid—I was just . . . that's not something I share with a ton of people because a lot of people's reactions vary. People are a lot of times appalled or disgusted by it. "Oh my gosh! You didn't have running water? Holy cow!" I mean, like, "You had an OUT house?!" I know that girls like that would be the kind of girls that would react that way.

Rivaling Session 1

Faculty 1: We notice it too. We notice when students are being silenced by other students. And I would say that it is not necessarily unique to these American Indian students, feeling this way. I think the student who comes from the west side from a more poverty background in comparison to a student who comes down from . . . a very wealthy, well traveled, you know, background. In a classroom, you sense a difference. Even my own children (who grew up on the west side) coming to [Western University], would say there were times when they looked around and they felt like none of the students in their classroom understood living in a diverse, [. . .] area kind of setting.

Faculty 2: // Right //

Faculty 1: And it was like, "Oh, those . . ." [there was] talk about "we're gonna have to go teach "those" kids." It was like they were hearing that they were one of "those". Even though it wasn't directed exactly at them. So, the eye rolling is, um, it has to do with confidence.

Faculty 2: I was gonna say it's not even the function necessarily of the content of the question (smiles). I notice eye rolling when questions are consistently asked

because the other students perceive they're gonna be stuck in the room longer.

Group: // Big laughs around //

Faculty 2: It has nothing to do with the question, it has to do with, 'Oh my G--, be quiet so we can move to the next PowerPoint slide.'

Third Interview, Response to Rivaling (Student A)

So they notice it, and they think it has to do with confidence. Whose confidence? The confidence of the student asking the questions? How much resilience is required of an American Indian student to survive in these classrooms?! On top of all the changes in setting and being away from home and environment and family, we also have to immerse ourselves in a white world that is competitive and harsh, AND we have to be confident the entire time. MORE confident than everyone else just b/c we have different questions. And it's supposed to be okay because the white kid from [town] is different too and he/she faces the same thing... YEAH RIGHT. Questions don't take up that much time, so I don't think it's about time. I think it's about who is asking the questions, why they're asking them, and how it applies to the eye-rollers. They don't think it applies to them so they don't want to hear it. Someday it will . . .

Follow-Up Question

Sundy: Why do the AITE students feel the need to ask instead of acquiescing to the eye rollers and staying quiet?

Third Interview, Response to Rivaling (Student B)

As one of those back-of-the-classroom sitters who did ask questions, I know that I asked the questions only after I felt comfortable with the situation. And it was not about confidence so much as trusting the individuals present with my thoughts and opinions.

I can say as a student the most offensive response I got to a question asked was from [Instructor] during a reading. I asked about a test and norming it on Native American children and her response was, "Well, you get your PHD; you can do the test and norm it yourself." I thought it was cop-out response as well as being a slap in the face.

I will say that I was not always comfortable sharing in classes or asking questions, but I also felt like as the [AITE] cohort we were representing Natives and thus had an obligation to prove that we had a right to be at that table and that it was not just a hand out.

Rivaling Session 1 Continued

Sundy: How, though? How do you address [eye rolling]?

Faculty 1: Well, I have talked to students individually who tend to (looks at Faculty 2) –

Faculty 2: // I would directly address it. //

Faculty 1: (nods and continues) ask too many questions.

Faculty 2: We've had to meet specifically with students and say, "You're being disrespectful to the students in the class when they're offering their [opinions] . . . or asking questions and you're obviously playing Tetris or something on your laptop, right? That's just not [acceptable] . . . you need to engage. You're going to get something out of it too. You probably can't answer that question. That's something that I always try to emphasize too.

Faculty 1: I'm the kind of instructor that will say, "I appreciate all the questions that you're asking. However, with the time constraints that we have, I can't possibly address them all and get through the material that we need to cover. So, my suggestion is that you write them down as you think of them during the class and turn them into me and I'll send you an email later or even get a call or you can come and visit me and we'll address all of those.

Faculty 2: That's funny cause I always tell my students I'd be happy if we got stuck on the first slide . . .

Faculty 1: // Laughs //

Faculty 2: and talk the whole time. // Group laughs // You know, what's interesting, you said about the survival in there and what I guess strikes me as very interesting about Anne's introduction is she, initially, it seems to me that she's posing a very easy survival technique, which would be sit in the front row because then you're not seeing any of these eye rollers. But then moves on and says she's not going to do that. But if you're bothered by eye rolls, I would sit in the front row and I wouldn't see anybody.

Faculty 1: And I'm a front row sitter. I purposely don't want . . .

Faculty 2: // well, it looks like she's recognizing

Faculty 1: // in . . . //

Faculty 2: the solution to it but it's not for her. // Laughs //

Sundy: Why might that be? Why would she know that? It's survivance, right? Survival and resistance. So why the resistance there?

Faculty 2: To the survival strategy? Yeah. Again, I don't know.

Faculty 1: Well, there's a perception, possibly, that the person in the front is going to be called on more and the instructor is gonna direct more attention to those

people in the front cause they're right there in your face. Maybe that's an uncomfortable feeling for this particular person.

But I'm with [Faculty 2]. It is a position where, and I take it a lot because then I don't have to worry about what people are thinking behind me when I ask the questions I ask, which I may ask more than most people. (Smiles around at group.)

Um, and so there again there's that survivance but that resistance. But I don't know if that's unique to the American Indian student. Like I was saying earlier, you know, you have to learn cultural capital at the academic level. It's its own environment.

Faculty 2: Oh, no one likes to sit in the front. I was thinking of my own [cuts off] . . .

Third Interview, Second Response to Rivaling (Student A)

I don't think sitting in the front row is a solution. Just because you can't see eye rollers doesn't mean they're not doing it. And you can sense the difference in the room, even if you can't see them. I think it's that general attitude behind the eye rolling that's frustrating, that you're "supposed to know" or you're supposed to find it out on your own. If that's the case then why do we even have classes? We're supposed to ask hard questions. Bryan taught us that. We can't get anywhere in an academic setting if we don't ask those kinds of questions.

And just b/c others don't care about our questions doesn't mean that they're not important. Someday it will apply to them. It's not just for us; it's for everyone who will ever come in contact with anyone else like us. I think it's heartbreaking to think that this student had questions that weren't asked, or topics that weren't covered. It's a loss to the entire classroom when that sacrifice is made. It's selfish of the other students to create an environment where those questions can't be asked. They're like bullies! And it's irresponsible of the instructor to let it happen.

Third Interview, Second Response to Rivaling (Student B)

I see [another student] in this answer and her determination to prove that she can do it on her own. The unfortunate thing is that this student is now working twice as hard as their peers, and the information they are looking for could have helped others. But not only does this student end up working harder, there is a chance of their just throwing in the towel all together because it is too overwhelming to be doing it on their own.

And we were guilty of the eye rolls too with individuals . . . due to frustration of doing teamwork . . . in the sense that [they] represented us . . . , since we were part of a cohort.

I sat in the back by choice so that I could get a good feel for the class as a whole in order to know if this was a safe place for me to share myself. However, in our SPED classes I think we pushed the envelope because we were empowered as a cohort to do so.

Poetic Transcript

that's the lack of cultural capital that some students aren't aware of
especially if you come from a background where
you have to stay there until you get what you need to be able to do your job
in some cultural groups, you sit the whole day at the table
until you get what you need to be able to make the tortillas
I mean, you don't get to go out and play, you know
and so you're not at all cognizant of the time frame (Right)
Whereas, there are students who come into the majority group (and other groups)
they're on a check box system and the time is very set
they have checked the first half hour, the second half hour,
counted your slides and know approximately how long each should last (Laughs)
And so when that student keeps asking questions that possibly will keep them
longer, resulting in not being able to get to the end of those slides
and having to put it off till the next time, that's a frustrating thing and so
the eye rolls happen (Right) to me, that's something that the teacher has a role in
helping all the students get through that issue

Third Interview, Storied Response (Student A)

I love this--the educational system is totally a check box system. You take one class; check it off your list. Take another, check it off your list. Each check is just one step closer to getting your degree, and the process is just endured until you're done. I think too many students feel that way, especially from "the majority group."

This made me think of my dad and an experience I had when I was younger. I spilled rice on the floor and when I tried to clean it up I left several kernels of rice on the ground. Our floor was put together by our family; it was sandstone rocks so it wasn't flat. There were grooves and cracks and rice was stuck in them. I had to sweep up every single kernel of rice from in between each groove and crack, regardless of how long it took me. My dad wouldn't let me go until it was done, no matter how many times I swept it. No matter how much longer it took to make dinner for everyone else, it had to be clean. My mom did the same thing with dishes. If they weren't clean enough, we did it again and again until it was clean. We had to be thorough in what we did, and that would definitely apply to our education as well. It's not about checking something off a list; it's about completing a task thoroughly and completely.

Third Interview, Storied Response (Student B)

I agree with [Student A] on this and can totally relate to the idea of being made to do something over or better if it was not done adequately . . . I remember once drying the dishes and not drying the silverware well enough before putting them away and my mom dumping the whole drawer of silverware in the water and telling me to do them again. She (mom) tells a story of my grandmother dumping the canisters on the floor once when they were not swept well enough. I think the message that these examples represented are that if

you mess up the 1st time because you're in too big of a hurry you not only end up redoing it correctly but often the task of redoing something could be harder than the initial task if you would have just taken the time and had some pride in your work.

This also reminds me of the term Indian Time and that most people think we use this as our excuse to be late.... However from a true standpoint it is not about the clock time so much as you stay until the job is done. Talking Circles can last hours because it takes several rounds to get the issue hashed out or it can be over in a matter of minutes depending on what is going on. We are not a linear people either as we tend to talk in a roundabout manner before getting to the meat of an issue. We get to the issue just not as quickly or bluntly as some others get.

Third Interview, Response (Student A)

I would love to hear their comments one-on-one. Just to see how they would differ from this. It's almost like it's a joke that the [one] student knew to sit up front, but didn't. And sitting in the front row is an "easy survival technique?" Why do they think it's easy? Just b/c your back is to the class? And in the end they say, "no one likes to sit in the front." But it's supposed to be easy?!

It's interesting that their 2 ways of addressing it are to talk to the students doing the eye rolling, or tell the student to ask their questions later. They have 2 different attitudes it seems--the one wants to hear the questions and respects the student asking them. The other wants to get through the content, so the questions can come later, at another time, in another place, in another setting that's supposed to be more comfortable and easier for everyone--it's cultural capital so they just have to suck it up and deal with it. But does EVERYONE have to do that?

... I don't know how to respond to this one. I think I'm mostly bothered by all the laughing. I wonder if that's how they feel comfortable answering the question posed...

Third Interview, Response (Student B)

I think the interesting concept of saying that someone is sitting up front to avoid the eye roll is comfortable and for survival would be kind of crazy because in general if you're in tune with the eye roll business you're going to be in tune with the environment and sense these even with your back to them. And I agree that the world of academia is its own little world and that the comment that no one likes to sit up front is also false because I think in the beginning of their academic career when kids are excited to learn they all want to sit up front near their teacher until there is a reason not to want to be there anymore and that usually comes from peer influence. Either because you're following the crowd and it's not cool to do or it is uncomfortable.

Questions for Additional Rivaling Sessions

Sundy: What equals too many questions to the AITTP student? Are the questions off task? How can we think further about the complex ideas concerning presence/performance here—what the instructor perceives as competent performance versus what the student perceives as undesirable or impossible?

CHAPTER 5

A DEEPER LISTENING TO NEGOTIATED MEANINGS

> How do you hear and represent the agency of "others"—the logic of learners, the cultural values, the alternative discourse strategies, the negotiated meanings that lie behind performance? (Flower, Long, & Higgins, 2000, pp. 25-26).

In this chapter, I move from explaining why and how this research was conducted—the methodologies and methods used—to a more extensive analyzing of data, thereby developing the meaning making aspect of the research more fully. Analysis in this chapter focuses on the textual actions and artifacts produced as a result of rivaling. Examining exchanges occurring between and among participants through rivaling, we can better understand the variety of interpretations embedded in participant negotiations of presence and performance as they relate to survivance and rhetorical sovereignty. Analysis of these action and artifact exchanges is foundationally informed by the literatures present in this document. More particularly, however, it is informed by how participants story the exchanges in relation to what we know from the literature.

To understand how and in what ways these negotiations and exchanges are evident, I look at how they are interrelated and how they work in tandem with historic understandings of American Indian presence and performance. Approaching analysis in this way, it becomes evident that negotiating intercultural exchanges through rivaling is an act of interpretation and creation (Harris, 2002; Powell, 2002). As we increase our scholarship through research of this type, we are more able to make imaginative leaps to connect ideas to actions, to

things that previously seemed unrelated. The research conducted here (by, with, in, and for Indigenous communities) worked in this way by utilizing and negotiating intercultural exchanges. Participants negotiated conversationally and textually to share lived experiences and establish relationship across difference so that possibility and meaning might be created.

You will have noticed that analysis has been occurring a little at a time throughout previous chapters and interchapters, a choice not typical of most dissertation formats. By presenting and analyzing this way, I intended to suggest an Indigenous epistemological choice related to giving information when it is practically required and most useful to recipients and to providing information when it can best be absorbed as knowledge. Elizabeth Kapu'uwailani Lindsey (2006) reminds us dissertations often compartmentalize things, when "a native mind will tell you it is all interconnected. The only way you can see a whole picture is to look at it holistically and not separate it out" (p. 12). My choice in relating incident and analysis throughout, then, is directly associated with an epistemology of storying/theorizing lived experience, and with an additional representation of relational and overlapping knowledge acquisition rather than knowledge acquisition based on division and delineation. Placing data analysis throughout illustrates how enactments of the dissertation's foundational concepts migrate rhetorical modes of presence and performance toward home or, in other words, toward sovereignty.

With this choice and with earlier analyses in mind, I return briefly to data presented in the interchapters: first, to reiterate the chancy and individual nature of survivance and second, to illustrate how Native participants enact survivance as a catalyst that propels or shifts them toward a deliberate and communitist sense of rhetorical sovereignty. I further show how participants draw on presence and performance to rival intersecting or overlapping instances of survivance and rhetorical sovereignty. These analyses finally lead to

the primary focus of the chapter: interactional tensions surrounding the rivaling exchange I have titled Norming the Norm. Looking carefully at this exchange, I begin to answer the question of how participants enact, receive, describe, and interpret tensions concerning, as Flower, Long, and Higgins suggest, the logic of learners, the cultural values, the alternative discourse strategies, and the negotiated meanings that undergird this project. Rivaling the Norming the Norm exchanges helps us re-learn and re-listen to stories of presence and performance in American Indian and intercultural educational contexts.

Enacting Survivance

Chancy. Individual. Survivance. The most observable tensions of Interchapter 1 arose from deficit assumptions made on the part of instructors, departments, and programs about student ability. One AITE student related that the amount of help given them—detailed calendars, print outs of schedules, ordering of text books, weekly writing and mentoring sessions—implied the degree to which authority figures considered support necessary. Acts of survivance, as exhibited in the mandatory supplementary instruction for example, made it resoundingly clear Native student participants did not appreciate an inability to see or respect their competence, a competence that seemed to be overlooked despite their having successfully completed general education requirements in previous systems and despite the successes that afforded them acceptance into the AITE and their educational programs in the first place. Their resistance fairly shouted displeasure with an assumption they could not successfully navigate educational coursework on their own terms. They were adults, after all: mothers, fathers, and caregivers. They held jobs previous to their university schooling experiences. They acted as volunteers in multiple venues and were leaders of projects in their communities, roles requiring high levels of planning, organization, and follow through—perhaps of a different kind epistemologically—but which nonetheless

demonstrated responsibility and competence. They were offended when their responsibilities and competencies were not recognized, and this sparked a cycle of student/instructor resistance. In the same breath, however, AITE participants emphasized their need and gratitude for the level of support given by Native faculty, staff, and peers. The very dispositions and elements that underscored their levels of ability and competence—their roles as parents, caretakers, and community members—also contributed to their increased need for support, although, clearly they preferred the kind of support given by Native colleagues and Native authority figures because it did not come with the implied suggestion of deficit.

Interestingly, the curricular and pedagogical foundations weighing in on how student schedules were constructed, including supplementary instruction, came from their program of study. By being late, leaving early, not actively participating, taking discussions off track, and generally introducing disruptive elements in the mandatory supplemental instruction, students exhibited marked resistance but only to the point where their survival in the program was not jeopardized. When students enacted resistance in response to deficit assumptions, program of study instructors resisted the resistance and in turn became less flexible, less accommodating. Instructors, participants said, "didn't want to accommodate and change deadlines" when students—due to their many (and sometimes competing) responsibilities—had difficulty meeting them. This fact was labeled "fascinating" (with a laugh) and "contradictory," since it came from a program of study founded on principles of educational accommodation. The feeling was that "in general, with the way the . . . department runs itself, it's pretty rigid." One participant mentioned the "whole construct" as having a behaviorist approach, i.e., resistant behavior can be changed by imposing consequences (penalties). This approach ignored underlying dissonances embedded in the

entire schooling situation, with its "check list" approach, for these students. You will remember how an unwillingness to be flexible was pointed out in participant excerpts from Chapter 4. The point came up in additional participant interviews as an example of the "whole paradigm" that indicated, "If you don't fit the mold then there's no room. If you deviate off to one side or the other, it's like you don't fit the pattern and therefore you're not going to pass. You're not going to get your degree."

Another participant tied instructor resistance and inflexibility to being part of a very large research-intensive school. In a large institutional system, "things get generalized," or standardized, and when they do it "let's people [faculty and administrators] off the hook." If majority students can follow the regimen, the thought goes, then Native students should be able to do so as well. This standardized expectation relieved instructors of the responsibility to learn about and understand something (or someone) outside the "norm." Further, since most instructors' scholarly expertise resided in majoritarian scholarship and not in American Indian scholarship, "there was zero interest in them by others in the [program] community." The prevailing sentiment, as summed up by a participant, was, "It's fine if they're here as long as I don't have to change anything I do." If a student performance was not within an instructor's established boundaries, she or he did not feel obligated to understand and address it. If and when difficulties arose for students, instructors felt justified in expecting (exacting?) 'normalized' responses. According to one participant, they "expect[ed] the same type of performances" from all students, "across the board." Background and personal experience ("in gathering information and navigating a large city, a large [university] community"), for example, were not factored in. Instructors and others in positions of authority did not care "if you came from a small town and this is your first time in a large setting." At very least, they were reluctant to make accommodations.

Additionally, because some faculty felt they had "pulled themselves up by the bootstraps," to succeed at the university, they did not understand why Native students could not, or would not, do the same. The sentiment, according to one participant, was, "these people are getting special treatment, they don't deserve it, and I won't bend." According to another participant, most instructors thought working with AITE students was "just more work" than they cared to undertake and, therefore, placed the workload of supporting AITE squarely on the shoulders of those who had originated the grants. Rather than seeing it as an opportunity with great possibility (How can *we* contribute? What can *we* learn?), the attitude was "'How are *you* gonna make this happen?' 'How are *you* gonna support students?' 'These are YOUR students!'" Thus, they shifted the responsibility for student success onto the shoulders of the few who were integrally involved and invested in the program and its resulting scholars and scholarship.

An overlapping tension arose from differing perceptions regarding how "successful" performance was gauged. As in most AngloAmerican educational systems, instructors gauged how well students acquired knowledge through a metric performance of graded assignments and papers. For these instructors, performance was measured by how well and in how timely a manner students completed bookwork, papers, and homework assignments. Instructors assumed knowledge would be gained because of textual work rather than by practical, embodied experience. Students, alternatively, measured their "real" knowledge by how well they felt they could or would incorporate principles learned in classrooms into action within their future teaching sites and their communities. Success was based on practical knowledge gained and students' confidence in their ability to implement that knowledge. This discrepancy is alluded to in the storied responses of Interchapter 4 where participants talk about being taught thoroughness by their elders, no matter how long it took

or how difficult it was. Knowledge was a matter of doing rather than saying or writing. Even project-based assignments designed to help students gain hands on experience were subject to checklists measuring how well their performances had conformed to conventionalized expectations. A checklist mentality, "may work in a corporate situation or business," said one participant,

> But when you're dealing with Native Americans, you have to be patient. Things get done in due time. We can't say, again, move from point A to point B. We are a community and [there are] other things we value more. We'll go in *that* direction to help somebody and then we go *back* to our jobs and go back *this* way. We're constantly crisscrossing our way to this point that THEY, the dominant society, says we should be. We just take our time getting there. And I don't see any harm in that as long as we, you know, we get there.

Expectations were very high for these students. They were continually told by those invested in the AITE that they were doing important work, work that was about "incorporating course material, working and putting it into an American Indian perspective, thinking about it much more broadly and deeply." Their work was at least partially about indigenizing the academy. For AITE students, success constituted "pressure to perform better than average," a necessity to not just "cut it, but be a cut above it." Conversely, there was push from the course of study program for Native students to assimilate, or at the very least "enact a performance of assimilation." Students were advised to treat classroom interactions like a game. If they wanted to be seen, heard, and recognized, they were told, they were going to have to learn to "talk White" and write White because it would "empower" them and allow them to be successful. This advice, understandably, was met with resistance.

The advice, however, is not unusual. It is common practice for instructors to counsel students who are experiencing difficulty by introducing them to the concept of Game. You'll be okay once you know the rules. You just have to learn to jump through the hoops. But

"[g]ames differ from one another in their spirit," Gadamer (1998) tells us (p. 107). What happens when the game of academic practice is not only novel for some students but also alienating in its total approach? What happens when those who initiate and control this academic game expect a 'tradition' to be enacted that marginalizes the players' histories and is not part of their repertoires? When what is required of students is not self-present(ation) as they have previously understood it but disguise, a simulation, a "representing for someone" something they are not, what then? (p. 108-109). Under these circumstances, playing the game loses its original quality of effortless involvement in "self-renewing play" (p. 105) and becomes a performance of "comportment" (p. 107), "a spectacle" (p. 109) not for oneself and for a receptive community but for a hyper evaluative audience. This was the case for one Native student, Mary. A mentor storied the performance this way:

> [Mary] was assigned to write a review of an article for a class, and she did, and she kept getting negative assessments back. The teacher wanted her to rewrite it and rewrite it. And she was willing, but the crux of the matter, as I saw it, was that she read the article, she didn't particularly like the article or value the article, and she had something to say about the issue that was not talked about in the article. And so she wrote about what she saw as the central issues of the topic and did not talk about the article that she was reviewing.
>
> I think it was actually a very subtle critique of the article because in highlighting what was absent from the article she pointed out the failures of the article, at least in terms of reaching her as an audience member. The professor didn't recognize that as a review. The professor wanted her to do a correct bibliographic citing of the article and provide a summary of the article, and this particular student was tenacious in her unwillingness to do that. And so—because I was supposed to be a writing tutor—I ended up sort of mediating that conflict, although I had a person that I thoroughly thought was right and one that I thought should hush up.
>
> Um, but, but she never did write a review that the professor accepted, . . . I think in the beginning, she didn't know, at least at one level, what was expected of her in terms of a review. She certainly recognized how to engage with the article. But in terms of formal details of what a review looked like, in that setting, I don't think she knew. But she was a very capable student, and one conversation, I think, cleared that up.
>
> She knew what was expected. But what was expected was in contradiction with what was authentic. I use that word with some caution because of the way it has been used

> in the literature around American Indian identities. But in terms of an authentic review of the article, given her reaction and knowledge, and what she saw as being there, that format wasn't useful.

Native student participants often felt the performative weight of enacting academic traditions/conventions that felt alien or inauthentic in their approach, and so they resisted. Their already packed-to-the-brim course schedules, consequently, were then stacked with additional "help" sessions and "do overs." This, added on top of family and community responsibilities, meant they quickly became overwhelmed, exhausted, frustrated, and mad. This was the way they experienced the spirit of the academic game. Yet, they persevered. They made their x-marks and utilized the strategies and resources available to them to complete their programs of study. They "put in [their] time" and "jumped through the hoops." They understood they were playing a game with "risk," and not for recreation but for the serious possibility of "re-creation" (Gadamer, 1998), p. 119). They ran the academic obstacle course, and at the end of two years they walked across a stage for the reward of a degree and a certificate. They exhibited survivance.

In the game of academic knowledge making, remember, EuroWestern thought creates the conventions, parameters, and architectures for participation. These determine how participants approach, enter, and move within institutionalized boundaries. Since the terms of the game, as participants have noted, are already established, it does not create a very flexible space for those who approach with other governing traditions and who try to push against its ivy-covered walls. We could interpret the actions of those who survive by agreeing to 'play the game' as undermining their integrity and denying themselves (Gadamer, 1998). But we could also say that students in situations like that described by Mary's mentor above actually hold onto "continuity" for themselves and "only withhold it from those before whom [they are] acting" (p. 111). They disguise themselves in order to give the

impression they are playing the game 'correctly.' In Mary's case, she demonstrated an ability to maintain continuity with herself and play the game strategically. She rewrote and rewrote, as many times as the instructor demanded, but refused to shed her personal, academic, and cultural integrity to write in a way she did not choose, that was not practically useful, and that did not address an issue or topic she felt was important. Other students as well employed trickster moves, choosing to be "altered" (p. 111) but not completely transformed.

Enacting survivance allowed Native participants to work the creases. It was emblematic of their individual ability to act in the moment and seize an opportunity to resist erasure. This was admirable, exemplary even. It allowed them to graduate with degrees and certifications that in most cases left them in better positions financially. However, the circumstances under which they had to enact it also left many of them damaged and hurting. In the end, one Native participant described the experience as "toxic" and "the worst" of their lives. People from whom disguise is continually demanded can forget they are just pretending to create the correct or proper impression. Enacting 'correct' performances can so completely tease them into simulation that eventually they forget themselves and their places in histories. They can sustain life-long psychic wounds, which, in turn, can result in the educational challenges so often cited in scholarly literature. This can be a consequence for Indigenous students who participate in the performance of an institutionalized academic game. As we can see by attending to Mary's story, whether this remembering/forgetting performance is experienced as positive or negative depends on how it is interpreted. Gadamer (1998) reminds us that every thing and every body in the academy is "subject to the supreme criterion of 'right' representation" (p. 118) as determined by EuroWestern epistemologies. Survivance, as evidenced in the mandatory supplementary instruction and the other performances enacted as ancillary to their course of study, is thus complicated.

From Survivance to Rhetorical Sovereignty

To see how survivance shifted to rhetorical sovereignty, I now return to the scenarios described in Interchapter Two. Just as the previous analysis helps us understand the complexities of survival and resistance, including how participants used survivance to achieve individual end goals of a degree and certification, the following analysis helps us see how participants combined survivance with rhetorical sovereignty for greater community power. In this supplementary instruction scenario, you will remember, Anne studied from flash cards while the instructor attempted to engage participants in a question and answer session. Anne declined. She performed an action that was in her best interest as an individual student, one that allowed her to survive the course for which she was studying even if it meant enacting quiet resistance to what was happening in the larger session. When the instructor insisted that Anne speak up (be present) and ask a question (perform), Anne said, "I'm not usually vocal. I learn from listening to discussion. If I have a question, I ask at another time." To which the instructor sharply replied, "Well, this is that time!"

The instructor appeared to be (re)acting from an understanding that identified the Native student's actions as epistemologically separate from those codified as acceptable in the university. The exchange between Anne and the instructor could be interpreted as an attempt on the part of that instructor to help the student "get over" whatever was causing her to avoid the time-honored, AngloAmerican classroom practice of question and answer. The student's refusal to perform in what is considered an acceptable manner might have then been perceived by as an obstacle to knowledge acquisition, a situation the instructor felt compelled to rectify. And perhaps the instructor was right to be insistent. Maybe Native students should resist the simulation of what is often regarded as an instantiation of American Indian "presence," (silence) and adopt the preferred "performance" of vocal

questioning within the classroom context, as majority protocol dictates. But as I watched the scene unfold, the tension created by the exchange was palpable. The imposition enacted by the instructor suggested impatience and bordered on disrespect. Certainly, it was disquieting because it felt like a moral judgment was being imposed. It felt like rhetorical arm-twisting.

At the time, Anne's smart and strategic resistance to instructional authority impressed me. She further impressed me when her request to engage the subject matter on her own terms was not respected and she deliberately deflected the value-laden insistence by deftly turning the spotlight to a questionable testing tactic. Instead of merely attempting to smooth over the tension in the room, she politely but pointedly confronted it. Anne's decision to resist stereotypical notions of cultural representation was a bold response to the situation at hand. Her engagement with the instructor can thus be identified as rhetorical sovereignty, although it was performed on a smaller, individual scale. By being rhetorically savvy, Anne potentially had her 'say' and chose how she would represent her concerns. In doing so, she asked her instructor to recognize Native strength and to migrate toward a sense of more respectful and equal pedagogical engagement.

The influence of an individual act of rhetorical sovereignty was strengthened when Dana, too, stepped up to support Anne's questioning of the case study exam question. Performing communitist support, Dana attempted to clarify the issue and perceptively made a point of valid, academic student/teacher discrepancy. As Anne's question demonstrated, many students are schooled to look for 'right' answers. If the instructor had not made the intent or purpose of the case study questions clear, Dana suggested, it would have been very easy for a student to become confused and sidetracked trying to choose 'correct' answers, rather than looking for underlying issues and defending choices based on knowledge of those issues. Both Anne and Dana's actions countered the often-conventionalized "silent"

simulation and directly established competency within a particular academic context. That the academic competency was displayed vocally was a reminder of cultural competency as well, a competency that called to mind oral traditions and the role speech-making played in bringing benefit to Native communities.

The exchange reminded me of underlying assumptions behind exchanges I have observed and comments I have heard not only in instances such as this but in other academic situations as well. A prominent professor, for example, once told me in class that if students did not want to change to become like her—did not want to stop 'behaving differently' and begin 'performing' as good AngloAmerican students should, one might say—then those students did not belong at the university. I have heard other professors comment that accommodating epistemologies outside the parameters of the EuroWestern model is the beginning of devaluing what is widely considered an elite education, and that maybe 'those students' with 'other' ways of knowing belong at the community college but not at the research institution.

Early work by David Bartholomae (1985), Patricia Bizzell (1991, 1994, 2006), and James Paul Gee (1996, 2001) indicates that some student initiation into EuroWestern academic presence and performance is necessary; some survivance, in other words, is necessary. But they, along with many other scholars, problematize ideas about socialization by contending that students should not have to become someone they do not recognize in order to be recognized by others and to enact successful performances in university contexts (Clark & Ivanič, 1997; Fairclough, 1989; Fordham, 1996; Ivanič, 1998; Matsuda, Cox, Jordan, Ortmeier-Hooper, 2006; Rose, 1985, 1989; Shaughnessy, 1977). Bruce Horner and Min-Zhan Lu (1999) as well as Kathryn Manuelito (2005) take this notion one step further and argue that utilizing a variety of differing epistemologies actually brings added value to

the educational process. Nevertheless, tensions surrounding epistemological expressions of presence and performance continue to exist, and they impact the success 'those students' do or do not experience in academic contexts.

As I reflect on the exchanges witnessed and on the covertly circulating sentiments expressed in professorial rhetoric, I am pricked with recognition. Although in theory I strive toward alliance in the best sense of the term, I am forced to own my complicit practice in any number of different but similar interactions where as an instructor I have insisted that "resistant" students accept and act upon my sense of what constitutes appropriate academic performance. I am certainly not alone in doing so. It is an act arising at least partially out of the widely held presumption of teacher authority that resides in academic contexts. Unfortunately, the problems inherent in these views of authority become compounded when engagements occur between persons of AngloAmerican and Native heritage, engagements such as those I have presented in this section. Then, not only is there a presumption of educational superiority, but there is also the continued imposition of colonization and assimilation. When interactions are based on this historical backload, students' attempts to enact self-determination and differing epistemologies based on different lived experiences are largely disregarded, and the academic performance required of them ("for their own good,") constrains their ability to exhibit and express their sense of appropriate presence (Stromberg, 2006b, p. 108).

If Anne and Dana had been White, their actions might have been read differently. They might have been read as arising from other, hybridic factors such as class or gender perhaps. Indeed, there are overlapping oppressions to consider. When I later queried Anne about what had happened, she identified her actions as partially arising from (dis)ability/ exceptionality: a hearing loss that makes it difficult for her to grasp spoken nuances in the

commotion of classroom activity, hence her essentialized, "silent" presence and her preference for clarification outside classroom parameters. Nevertheless, her performance was interpreted—by her instructor, by me and other mentors as observers, and even by her Native classmates—as an "Indigenous" response, one that was not being respected and that called forth an imposition of institutional power and authority.

During the individual interview process, Anne discussed the need to be present to counter such impositions and assumptions. She listed these as reasons for volunteering in her children's public school classes and for applying to the AITE. She says,

> I didn't see too many minority teachers in the school where my children were at, so I thought it would be a positive experience if they see a person of a different race that children can actually relate to and know that they have the same background. That's kind of the thought processes, as I wanted to go back to school.
>
> I started volunteering more, teaching about American Indians' history component in the teacher's classes, to teach more about the [tribal] culture and to say that we're not still living in teepees and we don't wear loin cloths. . . . They still have that perception that Indians look the look and they're not a part of the society that we are living in now. Kids kind of have that in their heads still, so I wanted to make sure that they know that they're your classmates in school, learning what you're learning.

Anne's presence through volunteering in her children's classrooms indicates contemporary Native survival, and she resists stereotyping by asserting that interacting with Native teachers in the classroom can be a "positive experience" for not only Native populations but for majority populations as well. "They," majoritarian children in this case, have to see that Natives and non-Native teachers and students have the ability to "relate." Majority populations should also "know" or acknowledge Native people as present in today's educational spaces. Majoritarian children should see Natives as "your classmates in school, learning what you're learning." In this instance, Anne works the creases using the situation at hand, even though her current moment of opportunity has come about because of an

already determined historical past resulting in few Native persons being represented in the local school system. In this way, she enacts survivance.

Then, when Anne talks about pursuing an educational degree, we see her trajectory move through survivance toward deliberative, communitist, rhetorical sovereignty. In deciding to participate in AITE, Anne resists current perceptions that Natives are not teachers and simulations that Natives do not have positive contemporary lives, only historically configured and stereotyped ones. She knows she can illustrate Indigenous survival through a more authoritative presence as a future teacher in the school system. She understands the need to bring more Native teachers and more culturally relevant curriculum into local classrooms. It is a deliberate step to Indigenize the academy, and is taken with an eye toward achieving the broader political and education goals of self-determination. In doing or performing these acts of rhetorical sovereignty, Anne performs a more accurate representation of Native histories, lives, knowledges, and strengths. By taking the next step, by participating in AITE and earning a teaching certificate, Anne exhibits rhetorical sovereignty.

Beyond an assertion of Indigenous presence and beyond (dis)ability/exceptionality, the exchange between Anne and her instructor can be even further nuanced. Remember that the student mentions her difficulty with hearing as a partial reason for delaying classroom interaction. Another possible reason for the performance is captured in Interchapter 4 when Anne mentions Caucasian student attitudes (eye rolling) as a reason to think carefully about presence and performance in the classroom. She says,

> If it's a question that I have in mind and somebody [American Indian] asks it, I see my peers roll their eyes . . . like it's the stupidest question that could be asked. And so I think if I find out myself then even better. Do you understand what I'm saying? And so I see these eyes roll . . . and I say, 'Why ask the question?'"

Whether coming from an instructor or a peer, the reaction to Anne's attempts to perform—whether through silence or verbal questioning—suggests both performances are perceived as deficient. And because this reaction comes from a non-Native instructor on one hand and "Caucasian peers" on the other, it appears the perception of deficiency arises from colonial and racialized ideas of presence and performance. Anne is perceived deficient in the incident with the instructor because she is seen as enacting "silent Indian," and her actions are not viewed as acceptable academic behavior. She is perceived deficient in the second case because, according to her non-Native peers, she enacts "stupid Indian."

A reluctance to confront these perceptions would be understandable given the context, yet—and this is a highly important finding of this study—because of the specific communitist support from her AITE cohort, support deemed crucial to success, Anne refuses to be erased by simulations and she does not resort to victimry. Her accommodation works toward more power and more life. Furthermore, even her stated decision to take the less overt route of survivance and "find out herself" can be read as an x-mark that migrates toward home. It is an assent to something that has already been decided but nevertheless is still an active decision. Anne's decision and Dana's support for that decision both indicate performative ability, an individual power to work with the situation at hand toward community benefit.

In the end, Anne and Dana experience immediate positive effect from their performances of rhetorical sovereignty. In this scenario, the instructors listen to them with intent to understand. In fact, the Native students' thoughtful questioning encourages the instructors to question how curriculum—in the form of case study exam questions—should be constructed. Ruth, in particular, affirms their "good observation," although her affirmation is guarded and she still asks them to see the rationale for the answers from the

perspective of the person in authority (both the law instructor and a future judge). Nevertheless, the response is affirmative, and all the instructors involved in this significant moment will likely (re)consider both how they press student participation and how they design exam questions in the future.

Norming the Norm

In this section, I discuss rivaling data concerning a classroom exchange that occurred between Native student participants and the non-Native instructors in their course of study. The exchange once again highlights issues of rhetorical sovereignty that surfaced in class discussions of educational disparities based on assessment tests and established norms. The six Native students in this cohort attempted to negotiate "normed" assessment, i.e., what teachers in training are taught about conducting "typical" assessments versus conducting assessments that are practical and useful for American Indian students. One Native student participant explains that through coursework they were taught to understand math, reading, reading comprehension, and how to do assessment. These were "great tools" to have in their "repertoire," she acknowledges, but "the thing the six of us in the cohort [came] back with was . . . how does that work for Native American students?"

It does not work well. James Banks' (1998) research into educational disparities informs us that "Members of some ethnic groups in the United States are disproportionately placed in lower ability groups because of their performances on IQ and other standardized aptitude tests," and these tests "discriminate against these groups because they are normed on middle-class Anglo-Americans" (p. 235). To norm means to figure out what is standard, typical, or usual for a given situation or group. A norm indicates the level to be complied with or reached. When the educational standard for *all* is determined by looking only at how middle-class White people perform, and when standardized tests configure "normal" based

on that set of people's experiences, it creates a problem for "others" with different experiences. It erases the presence and performance of what is normal for, say, American Indians coming from a rural reservation.

Elsewhere, I have recorded an incidence of erasure that I find relevant here because it illustrates how normed assessment is culturally biased. I call this incident the "Sections of Fence" story, and it concerns rural reservation grade school students and their Native teacher preparing for a normed or standardized testing situation. The students were stumped as they attempted to answer a math problem asking them to count sections of a fence. Fence "sections" did not make sense to these students because in their lived experience fences were constructed of strands of barbed wire not panels of vinyl or wood. When their teacher explained the concept of "sections" to them, they understood, of course, and could answer the question correctly. Tellingly, however, they blamed themselves for not knowing the right answer in the first place. "Somehow," their teacher related, "we are taught to blame ourselves for not knowing what the rest of the world knows. But I understand where this comes from. I hear how teachers . . . compare us to the rest of White American . . . and from then on we feel like we have to catch up to the rest of America because we do not know their way" (Watanabe, 2008, p. 121).

Based on experiences like these, Native student participants understood the disadvantage and disparity embedded in standardized or "normed" assessment situations. Their instructors admitted as much. Student participants were told that testing tools and other assessments the curriculum demanded be taught and learned were designed for middle class white students. They were "skewed" and might not work "if you're looking at it for African American students, Indian students or whatever." American Indians are such a small percentage of the population (1.5%) that they are not normed on national assessment scales.

When instructors "drilled on the bell curve" and other assessments, then, student participants began to ask questions. While they agreed that learning "all of these testing tools" was necessary and important, they also knew the assessments did not address their communities' specific needs. The assessments "did not say anything about what American Indians think, how they think, or what they know." The students asked their instructors about this, wondering if they could look "collectively at all of our kids" to norm the norm. The answer they received, according to several participants, was, "Well, you'd want to get your PhD and then you can do it."

The exchange resonated meaningfully with the six AITE students. It both sparked their disciplinary imaginations when they asked what other research had revealed ("What's the research around that?") and opened the situation up to critical questioning when the answer was "I don't know." The students asked how they could make such research "more valid" for Native students. ("How is this going to affect the students I am going to be teaching in a couple of years?" "How would this affect our community? How?") They asked about the possibility of conducting their own research, of going "back to our reservations or wherever we're going to work with our Native students" and administering assessments "the way the university showed us," after which they could possibly conclude something like, "Almost 90% of the American Indian students missed this question." The instructor answered their problem posing by saying, "Get your PhD and go do it yourself."

The response(s) they received to what they thought were innocuous and important questions created a dissonance sharp enough that a number of student participants referred to it in interviews, indicating they were taken aback by such answers. Connie mentions in the Eye Rollers rivaling texts that she felt it was "a slap in the face." Another student noted, "I mean, we'd asked this question before and had gotten blown off." Yet another said, "the

teachers would just kind of brush it off." This was the response that students got "a lot of the time . . . when we presented questions like that, that were about us." The difference in the assessment class, a student participant noted, was that it "wasn't just Connie's question. Do you know what I mean? It wasn't just MY question. It wasn't just Lillian being curious or Mahalia wanting to know. It was a question that was for all of us. And the answer was relevant to all of us." Because it was relevant to this group of six students, they persisted in their questioning.

Later, when rivaling the exchange, a participant instructor saw how assessment discrepancies might resonate with Indigenous students. It was like, the instructor suggested, norming populations with severe cognitive disorders. There was "absolutely no room in assessment for them." That being said, the instructor felt student reaction in this instance was "a misinterpretation of many of the messages our program pushes, which is curriculum-based measure and individualization." The instructor saw the "consistent theme of people telling them to get their PhD and find the answer" as very supportive, a response that had similarly been extended on behalf of other students. Suggesting that students get their PhD was inferring a belief in their "capacity to succeed academically. And it's not just 'go find your answer.' It's that you now have been given the toolbox through this experience to begin to answer these questions. And it's important for you to ask them. Figure it out."

As student participants explained it, however, the exchange was not really about individual capacity. In reflecting on the norming exchange, students felt the comments were not encouraging. Rather, the exchange indicated to them that instructors were backing away from their responsibilities of providing culturally relevant pedagogy and mentoring. And there was, in actuality, little support from most instructors, beyond rhetoric, for any of the AITE students to further their education at the level of PhD. One student, who received

"supportive" encouragement (verbally and by email) from a professor she admired and trusted, decided to apply to the PhD program but in the end changed her mind. The professor she had hoped to work with declined to advise and provide funding for her, or more accurately, backed away from that support, leaving the student to believe "You didn't mean a word you said." When instructors gave pat answers such as the one under discussion here, Native students felt they were implying students did not have enough knowledge to do that type of research work. The pat answer emphasized a division of authority between the instructor who had (or was supposed to have) access to knowledge and answers and the students who did not. And figuring out how assessment applied to American Indian students, the answer implied, didn't really matter anyway. Student participants felt most instructors were not that interested in helping students "find that answer so we could be prepared to get into our field and help our Native students."

When I followed up on stories about the incident through rivaling, asking whether students received any specifics as far as literature (journal articles, books, curriculum materials) that addressed their questions, the answer was that "some professors (two)" who had previously worked with Native students were "pretty good about sharing things if you mentioned an interest." If these professors "had a connection to somebody who had materials," they would bring something for the students to read, but students had to ask for that information; it was not included as part of the curriculum. Other professors, they reiterated, had the attitude of, "Well, get your PhD and do the research to find out yourself."

To date, none of the AITE students are pursuing their PhD, although according to one of their graduate mentors some are considering it in the future. The mentor indicates that educational commitment means different things to students, and each is admirable. For some, commitment means benefiting American Indian education by taking their current

level of experience back to their home communities. For others, commitment might mean eventually going a step further into a larger, academic research community. Of these students, "at least a couple," are "biding their time, paying off what they are required to pay . . . in terms of service for coming through the program." They are waiting for the opportunity to "come back through—not through [Western University] I'm sure—but somewhere . . . to do some good things, to put some messages out there." The mentor sighs. "I mean, like anything though, it's so SLOW. It just drives you crazy. Change. Change just takes a really long time."

The frustration of waiting for change to happen, coming from a programmatic perspective, is not only that it takes "a really long time," but also that the rhetoric does not align. As a corollary to earlier interchapter analysis, one graduate assistant emphasized, "we sort of claim that we're not [rigid, inflexible], that we're so open to all of these great things, . . . it's alternative assessments, alternative this, alternative that, and really when it comes down to it everything's like, it's been that way since the dawn of colleges." Help and accommodation, the interviews suggested, were the exception rather than the rule.

Another excerpt explains that the failure or inability of instructors to answer student participant questions was not—as it could be posed—just an isolated incident concerning assessment testing. Nor could it be explained away as a pedagogy by which instructors encouraged students to perform additional self-directed learning or research. In this excerpt, participants maintained that the instructor sometimes actively silenced Native questions even when someone else in the class was willing to attempt an answer. During a particular class period attended by two doctoral assistants, questions regarding how course material related to Indigenous communities were again brought up. According to a student participant, one of the assistants started to answer the questions but was "silenced by the teacher." In

conversing about the incident, two Native participants felt the attitude of the instructor was "We're not talking about that right now, and it's time to move off that subject." The Native participants did not remember this incident being related to the normed question, but to another question the assistant was willing to answer, yet the assistant was silenced. The participants stated, "It wasn't going to be discussed because the teacher wanted to move on. // Yeah. // 'We're moving on now.' // I remember that."

In this instance, the failure or inability to answer could be about instructors shielding themselves from troubling questions. It could be about maintaining control over the classroom agenda, setting the terms and limits concerning "who can do and say" what and how and when. This experience harkens back to the checklist system mentioned in "The Eye Rollers" rivaling exchanges. Instructors only have "so much time" and they have planned "a certain set amount of things that have to be done," so they can move to the next concept or idea. Native students are expected to "step into this world" run by time clocks within a EuroWestern time frame. As a participant mentor allowed, they are expected to "be on time," to "complete these five things in this very specific way to demonstrate [they] have these very specific skills, which was also in some ways foreign to how [they] demonstrated competence or knowledge or wisdom in their home communities." As noted in interchapter analysis, competence, knowledge, and wisdom in Indigenous communities are demonstrated through practical application, application student participants were attempting to explore through class discussion. Some instructors "thrive on that interaction happening," whereas others have "got to get on to the next measurable thing!" "That's the beauty of teaching," one instructor joked, "a measurable class."

Stepping into this academic world, participant instructors agreed, could be "very rigid" at times, especially for "culturally/linguistically diverse students." What about "the kid

who doesn't speak English . . . and needs a lot of support?" A participant instructor admitted, "I don't think we'd even thought of addressing [this case] until we had this [AITE] group. But after we had this group, we thought of addressing it." In the norming the norm incident, a participant instructor suggested, classroom instructors might not have felt comfortable addressing questions of Indigeneity because they had never been taught to address it and "they [had not] investigated it themselves." When Native students pushed for answers, the attempt at classroom engagement could have felt—to the instructor—like a class that is out of control. So, "it's easier to bring it back to, 'No, I've got to cover what I planned and what's on the agenda.'"

Systems of control could also be conflated with what is "legally required" of teachers, what the state board of education determines instructors have to teach as part of teacher preparation. In this case, it is a state mandate of national assessment norms. As one participant instructor explained,

> We're a discrepancy model state whether we like to admit it or not. . . . We know this is not good practice for culturally/linguistically diverse populations. Anybody who knows anything about assessment knows this is not good practice. Yet our Board of Education and our systems here, that is the predominant way of doing it.
>
> And to be frank, some of our reading assessment specialists don't . . . really feel comfortable about moving into what we do about culturally/linguistically diverse population assessment, those 1 percents, those 2 percents. So we go along with 'we have to teach this.' But . . . we aren't necessarily buying into it ourselves, and we don't have the answers for what may be better. So we just throw it out there to you to come up with the better measures, the better answers.

This is how "good . . . educators" perform anyway, the instructor maintains. They comply with regulations. They know that "cognitive measure" does not address daily praxis, but these measures are required on penalty of censure or fines. Assessments must be in student folders, and teachers must know and be able to communicate with stakeholders what those assessments mean. The classroom instructor may not have specifically stated why teachers in

training have to learn particular assessments "no matter what and just suck it up and do it," but it is likely these regulatory measures were "playing out here." While other measurements, such as those that are curriculum based, are "finally" being used to teach assessment as well, that doesn't mean these "other" measurements are accepted at the systemic level.

As the participant instructor asserts, you have to make the case at the university level to get even small change to happen in the classroom. "Change at the university measure? It's more than an instructor has, to take it on. . . . It takes a lot to get a system to change." Then, too, even were a new line of culturally relevant assessment measures given the go ahead institutionally, some instructors would still resist on the grounds that they do not address the majority of the population, the "White, middle-class students." One participant instructor noted, "We have to be careful about not boutique-ing ourselves into a place where we are then not attentive to the White audience who are our primary group of teachers, who are responsible for knowing this work and enacting it in the classroom." Were there to be a change that accommodated "other" communities, one participant instructor suggested, the rhetorical pushback from instructors might sound something like, "Now why am I doing this again? Because my students are going to schools where they probably won't use this." The participant instructor further stated that instructors would have to be convinced, would have to be told, "No, there's this community out there, a lot of them now, actually, a long history of them now, that need this." Instructors who are "most comfortable" addressing educational needs in a way that is familiar to their White middle-class experience would not "have the buy in" to see the need AITE students wanted to address. They would not follow through with appropriate canon and curriculum. AITE student participants indeed pointed out that when they asked for a change in the classroom that would address the communities they were interested in, they were silenced.

This does not mean negotiation never occurred. In fact, as one mentor said, at times there was "incredible dialogue . . . where . . . compromise is the closest word that comes." When this type of dialogue occurred, an AITE student might concede, "I do have to demonstrate that I have these skills or competencies," and an instructor might then admit, "There are a lot of different ways we can do that." In other cases, however, participant instructors resisted seeing "the bigger picture" and were unwilling to concede that there were ways to demonstrate competency other than those outlined on their syllabus. The "little satellite efforts" that occurred within individual classrooms were "significant" but still left "gaps within the daily work" that were "vast." Students struggled with educators who said, "No, there's no other way." They had to retake some courses, even though, as one mentor states, it was " not that the student didn't have the ability . . . it was that we just hadn't given them an opportunity to do that in a way that made sense." Some people either forgot or didn't recognize, the mentor continues, that the typical way of training teachers was for "mainstream sort of settings" when "*these* teachers" were going back into settings that didn't look anything like the mainstream. "You know, there are a lot of differences. . . . There were some missed opportunities to learn a little bit more." Some welcomed the opportunities difference provided, but some "really missed out on some of what could have been learned."

Rivaling the "norming the norm" exchange led to participant instructors noting this as a "critical point." There is, they acknowledged, a great need to convince colleagues, and the university system at large, to rethink the target population, to reconsider who benefits from the type of teacher education the university is currently providing. Demographics[25] are

[25] The 2010 Census reports that American Indian/Alaska Native population, either alone or in combination with one or more races, grew by 27 percent from 2000 to 2010, increasing their presence among all people in the United States to 1.7%.

changing. It is a matter of seeing and allowing presence. In rivaling this point, the conversation played out as follows:

> Faculty 2: That seems to be one of the critical points. And in [our state] it's a little bit different. But I would say in many states it's not true. Their consumer for teacher education would not be White middle-class.
>
> Faculty 1: Well, that gets back to presence again. As [Native] presence here is larger, there's a better chance that our practices in meeting the needs will get better. I think it's already . . . we've learned a lot from this group.
>
> Faculty 3: I think WE learned a lot, but systemically we did not. Or we may certainly have learned, but the action, the follow-through, is probably not significant.
>
> Faculty 1: The sad thing is, [AITE students] have all left now. And the system is like, 'Oh, great! Now, (relief) we can go back.' And I'm like, 'No! You can't go back!' . . . I mean, a small thing like getting ESL to be a part of what every teacher has to have before they can leave the institution . . . , we just barely got it approved. But to convince everyone that it's just not one area but all areas that need to be looked as a need for their programs?
>
> Faculty 3: I agree. That's probably the most significant leap we've made from a structural end. But there isn't a day that goes by that I don't have to defend why we have the courses we have in that program, and the underlying philosophy of specific courses is challenged almost every day.
>
> But I think that . . . was the spark for multiple attempts to begin conversations that challenge faculty to examine more than the curriculum that's in front of us. And also the underlying sociopolitical issues that influence decision making, that then give students the tools to be critical consumers of research, critical consumers of the tools they're using. I mean, it's interesting, we [faculty in conversation] all have [similar scholastic] backgrounds, so, I mean, um, for whatever reason that's given us a different perspective on this work . . . but I don't believe that people are fundamentally on that page.
>
> Faculty 1: I agree. And I would say at this point, this long after we have had our American Indian students, our assessment special education course is still not where it needs to be. // Yes, exactly. //
>
> Faculty 2: And it's not just our course, it's the processes we use.

As previously mentioned, participants allowed that instructors did give "just a smidgen" of what Native students wanted to know. Nevertheless, it was hard for student participants to feel good about that level of teaching response, and it was equally hard to

critique it. One student had difficulty even expressing the sentiment. It took seven starts—(But I think they) (like I said) (they) (you know,) (shakes head) (because I know a few of them would) (you know)—before reaching the heart of the matter: "they would ask and it was just pushed aside." She says,

> But I think they, like I said, they, you know, (shakes head), because I know a few of them would, you know, they would ask and it was just pushed aside. "You find your own answers." But it was never answered, which I just found sad because we need to know. *We probably should be the ones to find out* what we need to know so we can inform other [teachers]. (emphasis added)

When the student expressed sadness in this excerpt, I felt sad too, especially because "We probably should be the ones to find out" sounds an awfully lot like the self blame of the rural reservation students' "We should have known that already," and Anne's comment about the eye rolling incident, "It's like I should know that."

Graduate assistants found the lack of help and the lack of interest "disappointing" and "disconcerting," especially in the context of their course of study. As educators, they felt their job was to "accommodate" and to "make experiences meaningful." It did not make sense that some would be unwilling to enact those roles for American Indian students. As one mentor said, "I don't understand why it's not generalizing!" It creates dissonance, the mentor suggested, to get up in front of a class and espouse "all these wonderful things about [the course of study] and how all these things are changing, but . . . not let it change within our own classrooms." It is the same concept, she said, just applied to a different population. It involves changing canon, curriculum, and pedagogy to suit Native needs.

Part of the dissonance, for students, then, arose from their assumption that the very presence of AITE and its collaboration with the program of study—their presence and performance within both entities—indicated a willingness and ability on the part of faculty members to address American Indian concerns and needs. They assumed it was to be part

and parcel of this particular university experience. It was, in fact, the very thing that would/should set this experience apart from other university experiences for Native students. They were going to learn "the pedagogy" of working with Native students. They were going to "learn this whole new philosophy and what makes our Native children's brains tick." Students understood that their role in the joint endeavor was to ask the hard questions; and, based on self-determination through self-education, they also understood they had a right to challenge the curriculum in this way. One instructor conceded that student participants were "empowered" by courses they had taken early on, like the Indigenous Epistemologies course taken through the "social justice arm of the education department."

Taking these courses at the beginning of their coursework may have done them a disservice, a participant instructor noted. The courses may have led them to believe that instructors expected and valued questioning—or as a participant noted earlier, "bringing new perspectives"—when what was actually valued or required was cheerful compliance, a parroting of teacher views "even if those views denied the students' own experiences and caused them to appear to support the obliteration of their own cultural heritage" (Katanski, 2005, p. 88). AITE students may have been "set up" that way because, as one faculty participant notes, "we did empower them with 'You'll have to be the ones to alerts us to what the needs are.'" In fact, one participant instructor emphasized that self-advocacy was a specific indicator that the AITE mission was working. The problem was that not all faculty members had the same understanding regarding the nature of the AITE program and their collaboration with it. Speaking up was thought to indicate "a reporting back" mentality and was taken as an accusation that "these instructors are not meeting our needs." Advocacy of this type was thought to be divisive, and it violated the more expected convention of accepting the decisions of the teacher without challenge. Instructors did not seem to connect

Native student self-determination with the explicit self-advocacy of the course of study "disposition and curriculum." They did not understand their responsibility to problem solve with the students through respectful talking and listening. The Indigenous Rs were not in play, and students felt *that* violated an implicit respect and responsibility agreement. Thus, discrepancies regarding (un)acceptable performance did not jibe, although they should have.

Rather than viewing self-advocacy with respect, rather than responding to Native students as to someone with equal status, some instructors shut the exchange down and moved on. They felt "uncomfortable" and "threatened," when self-advocacy came from these particular students. It made a difference in how students in this cohort were (or were not) accepted. Certainly, some AITE students participated more in class than others, but all students in this cohort were willing to ask questions. The difference that emerged could have resulted because this particular cohort "constituted about one half of the [course of study] cohort that year," and this seemed to negatively affect their ability to be accepted in the whole cohort. Participant instructors acknowledged that interactions with this AITE cohort were not as welcomed, and their expertise was not recognized as often.

One mentor, in fact, expressed amazement at how seldom others from the dominant majority recognized the "knowledge and value" AITE students brought to the classroom, including what they could contribute to class discussions and to the course of study program. Assumptions made by these classmates were "negatively tinged," the mentor states:

> I remember on one occasion that a professor posted the scores of students without their names . . . but . . . by an identification in terms of, this is the high in the class, this is the low, so students could gauge where they were on the scale. Two [AITE] students were in that class who worked so hard in the program and were bright, lovely, easy-to-get along-with women who had done everything imaginable to be friendly and collaborative (so far as I could tell). Another student in the class came up to them and said, "So, I guess you two are at the low end of that scale." Sort of apologetically, you know, that she felt bad that they probably were not performing well, and they, of course, ironically, were in the top tier of the scores in that class.

> But there was just that assumption that they must not be performing well. And I don't know what she made that assumption based on but I have some guesses. And they don't lead me to believe that she had been taught very well about the realities of [AITE] students' gifts and experiences.

Thus, even when different groups shared testing situations and questions in common—as in coursework—simulations, as we have learned, maintained an influence. The example speaks to how Native student performances were not accurately valued or assessed by their peers, and how microagressions of devaluation were probably replicated in the classroom by their professors (or vice versa).

In addition to raced interactions, intersecting oppressions related to gender might have influenced the differential valuation placed on these AITE students. The assessment course, for example, where at least one of the norming the norm exchanges took place, was divided into two sections, one filled almost entirely by the six female AITE students who were all strong Native women. "Other people would easily describe them as feisty and disruptive," one participant notes. "People thought they were supposed to be 'this *type* of person," whatever simulations "Native woman" evoked. They were, as one participant instructor mentioned, "confrontational" when necessary, but usually with "appropriate timing." They did not allow themselves to be pushed too far. When one participant had difficulties with her student teaching placement—"being treated inappropriately in practicum" and having a "teacher turned against her"—she explained her situation appropriately. She was very present, but she was still not heard. Mentors and instructors who "moved in to help," were also "treated as if [their] intervention was inappropriate." Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998) draws from Inés Hernández-Avila to affirm that when Indigenous women become "center as subjects—as sovereign subjects—[they] often unsettle, disrupt, and sometimes threaten other people's, particularly many white people's, white scholars', white women feminists' sense of self as subjects. That may not have been [their] primary

motivations, but it is necessarily inherent in Native women's claiming [their] right to speak for [them]selves" (p. 494; p. 558; see also Archuleta, 2006). Conversely, when a male AITE student was the only Native in the classroom, "he was not seen as a threat. . . . Students would give more respect, as shown by interest in what he would say in class and not excluding him. . . . There is something culturally related to feeling it is okay to mess with women as opposed to men."

Interactions in this section of the assessment course occurred in much the same way as they did in other AITE study groups or Native gatherings: lots of talking and teasing, lots of participation and discussion. Native students felt free to say and ask what was on their minds with less concern about surveillance. One participant instructor suggested that when there were only one or two AITE students in the classroom, "their presence was not threatening at all and was welcomed." On the other hand, when the course of study program brought in "six brown people" and there were "only four others in some classes who were of the majority group," instructor and peer reactions to this "critical mass" were not always receptive. The classroom dynamic changed. "All of a sudden the [AITE students] outnumbered the four." So the resistance (think back to the eye roller exchange) became more pronounced: "Them again. Seven of them." (Notice the escalated number.) Faculty and students seemed more likely to accept AITE students when there were one or two rather than five or six in a cohort. As Deloria (1970) informs us,

> Discrimination . . . has been built upon a tacit recognition of the "groupness" of these communities. That is to say, discrimination and deprivation were not founded on the dislikes of the white community for any particular individual in the minority groups. Rather, these attitudes were based upon the fear of and dislike of the groups because they were groups. Insofar as they had identity, that particular identity was the red flag waved before the white bull. (115)

When the ratio was tipped in favor of Native students, as their presence and performance became dominant in other words, discriminatory attitudes were more likely. Students were perceived as more threatening.

One participant instructor noted that if the cultural and systemic competencies students need are actually taught, then assessment is going to work. But this was/is not taught, and "that's where the big reflection is, if we're assessing [standardized assessment tools]: an educational system that doesn't have a long history of being successful in supporting Native Americans." What is most troubling is that while the question related to norming the norm came up repeatedly, it is not, as one instructor noted, "overly difficult to address." It might have been as simple as compiling a bibliography of all scholarly sources related to Native assessment. It might have been a matter of putting these students in contact with Native scholars at other institutions. It might have been as simple and profound as directing students to an Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and being willing to act as sponsors while this cohort conducted a Native assessment research project. It might have been as easy as creating enough flexibility in their course scheduling to allow such a project to occur. It certainly could have been as easy as saying directly and with respect, 'Those are excellent questions. I will help you find the answers. And let's talk as a class about why these answers are not readily available.' The problem, then, isn't that the question was not easy to address. The problem was that it was not addressed, even when students asked repeatedly. Instructors were unwilling to acknowledge that Native students had a justifiable concern, and it was located precisely along a racial fault line, reflecting longstanding colonial hierarchies where (White) instructors simply have to be right and superior. They were unwilling to question a system they knew worked in their favor and against minoritized populations as embodied by these students.

The data presented in this chapter bring to light discrepancies and tell us important things about how Native and non-Native participants on Western University campus interacted in questioning and/or (re)presenting academic presence and performance. Access to and interpretation of this data through rivaling allowed participants to speculate about what those discrepancies meant and how they were related to deeply held convictions concerning self-determination through self-education. Unpacking these discrepancies has specific implications for Indigenous education at the University. It should additionally provoke significant interest for those who work with Indigenous populations in other universities and in other related educational contexts. Finally, it should provide those scholars who work primarily in the fields of cultural studies and/or anthropology with additional contextual understanding.

The methodology and methods used to collect and analyze data offer one way by which to re-present Native presence and performance in receptive ways. Imaginative liberation means we see participants perform strategic acquiescence and resistance to AngloAmerican epistemologies. We see critical innovation from a position of Indigenous strength. We see participants perform fixity, fluidity, balance, and iterations of all three. Working in the Native present becomes a way to recenter a Native past and to imagine Native possibilities for the future. The rhetorics of presence and performance practiced by study participants and uncovered in this project offer an avenue to better praxis. Rivaling helps us better understand how praxis is often made to function for purposes of colonization but might instead be used to construct more appropriate understandings of sovereignty for the benefit of community.

To this point in the dissertation, I have most often interpreted "community" to indicate Native-affiliated places and spaces that can and should benefit from this research.

As participants belong to multiple and overlapping communities—home, tribal, programmatic, departmental, academic, classroom—each iteration here calls for different enactments of presence and performance, each evokes its own tensions and joys. To privilege a Native viewpoint, we need to understand community as Powell (2007) suggests, i.e., in light of homeplace, support structure, and center. To be a member of a community is "a responsibility, not a hobby or an entitlement" (p. viii). One allies with Native community, we understand, not by virtue of assignment or authority but by adherence to the Indigenous Rs of respect, responsibility, relationship, relevance, and reciprocity. The scripted interview excerpts in Interchapter 5 reflexively define and illustrate participants' sense of community with these factors in mind.

Interchapter 5: Talking About Community

"A community is a homeplace, a support structure, a center; being a member of a community is a responsibility, not a hobby or an entitlement" (Powell, 2007, p. viii).

Defining Community

> I define community as a sense of belonging, shared values, and shared beliefs, common interests, like-mindedness. Thinking of where I grew up, I found myself not part of the dominant culture. I had to define what community really means. I have a family community and a personal community, which is split into two segments: friends and profession. I feel like I'm skirting the margins in all these communities and not being a full member. (Sammi)

> [Community] would be something that you feel connected with, an attachment to, and have a desire to interact with on some level. And a shared . . . not necessarily the same perspective on things or anything like that . . . but at least an understanding that you're not feeling attacked by the people within [it]. . . . It can be diverse. It's safe though, in that it's accepting and supportive and connected. (Kathy)

> [Community] is such a huge thing because I'm battling with the definition of what it means to be a member of my own profession, my own discipline, and so—I don't mean to get emotional, but I get emotional about these things. YOU have an understanding that someone else coming into this interview may not. Community doesn't resonate in the same way [for everyone]. It's very complex. (Sammi)

University/Academic Community

Once I got into this program and started going to [Western University], I was very excited, but I was also scared. It was really hard on me. There were plenty of times when I just wanted to say, "I can't do this." I would go home in tears . . . and say, "What was I thinking?" I just felt like I didn't have the intelligence as a white person, as their way of learning. I didn't have that much knowledge. . . . And I just felt like, you know, how am I going to fit in with everybody else here? Going into the classroom with all these Caucasian students up front and here I am way in the back, hoping to hide from the professor, hoping he's not going to ask ME questions because I don't know! . . . Then I thought to myself, I'm here to learn. I may not know as much as they do, but I will. I will. Once I listen to the professor and soak in all this stuff. And I'm going to ask questions. They may get tired of me because I'm always asking questions, but there's a lot of things that I don't understand as well as the Caucasian students here in class. (Mahalia)

Survival connotes persistence. Almost opposite of resistance because in order to survive you learn those codes, the secret language, in order to do what you have to do within that community. I think that's how I've managed it. (Sammi)

Knowing . . . the whole historically [sic] thinking that we didn't write as well as our non-Native counterparts or whatever . . . my attitude became "I'm gonna disprove this. So I busted my butt to make sure I did well. . . . I mean, even though I've said I'm not 100% this semester, part of that is my own resistance. I could probably have had all my assignments done. And it's like, "No. I'm not going to. I'm going to take the time, and I'm going to be gentle with myself instead of pushing." I worked so hard to prove that I'm a good student that this semester it's like "No." I mean, (sigh), I think I made the conscious decision to pull myself back and NOT do it. Rather than be the workaholic, I would rather be the go-out-and-socialize. Not the party/socialize but the peer relationships. I'd turn people down for things. This semester it's like, "Okay. I'll go." . . . I was prepared to [do well], because AITE was paying the stipend. My first and foremost thought was, "They are my employer." I owed them 100% and my output reflected upon them. . . . and then this semester, the lax attitude. Maybe part of that is because of what I'm seeing or feeling from the University's lack of support. It's like, why should I try to prove this point 'cause you don't care. (Connie)

There's an intellectual community, but for me that community has always, particularly at [Western University], felt to be somewhat in contradiction or at least as seeing itself in superiority to the other communities I belong to. And I felt that sort of poignantly at the University, which made my attachment to my other communities stronger because as I heard people talk about the other communities to which I belong and to which people I love belong to that don't belong to that intellectual community, I felt somewhat on the defense about the value of those communities and the goodness and beauty of those communities. (Lisa)

Community as Homeplace and Support Structure

Once the other students from AITE came into class, and they had the same classes as I did, I felt so much better. I didn't feel so alone. I just had so much help with the AITE program . . . . They were just so attentive to my needs . . . . They were always there for me, asking if I needed any help. . . . The AITE program was like home to me. They were Natives. (Mahalia)

I think that having each other was the strongest source of survivance. I mean, if I didn't have these other ladies in the class with me, I know I wouldn't have wanted to come back. It was hard enough as it was but just having them in a class with me and knowing that a lot of the time we had similar questions and similar concerns, do you know what I mean? Last summer, when we brought some things up, it wasn't just me asking it. . . . It was all of us. (Dana)

That's one of those pieces of community building I think that they did amongst themselves, the AITE students, um, helping each other with their kids. It was, you know, [one student] would often have somebody else's children that she would go pick up from school because another student would be in class or another student's car was broken down. [They] seemed to do a lot of that type of care giving and caretaking, which is not a part of my world, which is interesting. My family, we don't have extended family here and we don't really rely on neighbors or even friends unless it's an extreme emergency. So that's probably, that's very much background coming into play. . . . They did seem to form their own community among themselves, which was nice. More so than any other students I've ever interacted with in my own community. With the students, with my peers, it was nothing like what these women had together. (Kathy)

Community Responsibility

I'm in various organizations. There's the community of my children's school that I HAVE to be a part of because I want my children to succeed . . . when it comes to education. I don't want them to fall behind like I did. . . . There's a lot of things I have not known until . . . I've grown up. And so my children need to know this before. They're taught now so when they're older they'll know what they need to. . . . I try to volunteer down in my community, in the Indian Walk-In Center, and [in] my church community, and my neighborhood community, where I live, as well. I think if I shut those doors I won't have a community. I'll have nothing to rely on. And of course my own home community. And then we have friends that live wherever. And that's the communities, the networks, just the friends we encounter, you know? We have something that we can connect ourselves with. So I try, and I think I do more than I should, but I try and do that for the benefit of my children. And to be seen. And to be heard. (Anne)

AITE students seemed so much more connected to their cultural background and to the richness of relationships with people and taking time to not just learn from people but taking time to be with people and help each other. That was a constant

battle with their trying to do this program that was black and white: 'you have to get these credits,' 'you have to take these classes this semester or you're going to be out of the program,' which was then tied to finances. I mean, it was a constant struggle, I think, for them. And the fact that so many of them did get through . . . I always envisioned that they sort of uprooted some of their communities and brought them with them and then recreated some of that here. (Kathy)

They were willing to come and take some knowledge that's got a lot of empirical evidence to support different practices. But then to also serve their communities, as mentors to their own . . . you got to see that they were really in it not because they were, "I'm going to come out of this a better person, and I'm going to move into this other world" but "I'm going to take this and I'm going back to where I came from and I'm going to make that a place that is broader and has something additional to offer than what we've been able to do in the past." (Della)

Community is not a Hobby

You have to see those letters after the name or find a worthy business or status to be heard. I think that's unfortunate because certain cultures, you know, can bring a lot of good to communities and don't necessarily have to have a degree behind them, but that's how our society is and that's what is respected, unfortunately. . . . I never would have qualified for any other positions because I didn't have the degree behind me. So, it is important to have that. I can see the difference now that I do have that. There is a sense of leadership, maybe, or a sense of accomplishment that others see in you so they listen. They do interpret, in their minds, "Okay. Here's an individual who went through a university system and graduated just like I did." And so we're common in some ways. We're peers. So now I can talk to this person. It's just unfortunate, I think, that that's what our society accepts. . . . I don't go around saying, "What degree do you have? Oh, okay. You can be my friend." (Laughs) You know? Or, "we can talk now because we share common degrees." It's not conducive to a healthy community. It's divisive, in a lot of ways. (Louis)

Not an Entitlement - Della's Reflection

Initially, it was just a job for me. It was like, "I can make a little bit of cash." . . . But then it became just so much more. After the first moment of working with [AITE students] . . . it was like, "I want to be a part of this."

They were looking for people to do this job, to work with AITE students . . . I was just lucky enough to be [a] doc student, and they asked me if I was interested, and absolutely, I was. . . . [It was about] trying to get as many experiences as you can. . . . It was actually more a learning experience for me than for those awesome students. I mean I had never worked in that capacity, with a group that was so different from me.

They sat down with all of us . . . and talked about what our role was and how we were expected to interact with the students. When it came right down to it, I thought, 'This is SO not how this is going to function,' because it wasn't how the ladies I was working with functioned. It was not a meet at 3:00 on Wednesdays and go over these five classes. You know? It was—you had to have some structure but—it was also about sort of forming these, . . . relationships and TRUST. You know, a level of trust that me, walking into that room, I did not have. And it took me quite a while to gain that.

So, initially, we were meeting like Wednesday afternoons at 12:30 or something and we were meeting . . . in the conference room that was very sterile, and I think the first few times there was sort of this—and I don't know if that's really what it was but it sort of felt like—testing of the boundaries. Students would be late or would come for five minutes and say, "Oh, but I have these five things I have to do" and would head out the door . . . I wasn't a babysitter and wasn't somebody who could force students to participate in these groups. I mean I was there to do the job as best I could as a resource and a mentor . . . and it took us a while. Eventually, it came to I met them at their apartment and we had some social time first, talked about what was difficult. It was really more like a conversation than it was like me being this, "I'm the teacher" kind of girl.

And I really did feel this, sort of like, "Why was [she] chosen to be put in this position? What does she have to offer to me as a student going through this experience?" And so, . . . it took quite a lot of time before we were able to come to this, I don't know, sort of like a dance between all of us in working things out. But once we got to that place where I was comfortable and where they were comfortable with me, and feeling like I wasn't just somebody to TELL them how to get through the program? I think, well, I know, we have amazing relationships.

I wanted to make the experience as functional as it can be and not just feel like I'm stepping in as some sort of, I don't know, dominator or something.

Community and "Certain Populations" - Evie's Reflection

Most universities don't make exceptions for certain populations. They're founded on a certain principle, which is, you know, Anglo European. It's 'This is how things are done over in Europe, and they came over [to the USA], and this is just how it is.' When you come from a community where there are different values, and different senses of what's important, it's kind of a shock to come here and be told that family is important but we don't focus on that. We don't really care if you're going through something.

I think it was hard for [administration/faculty] to grasp why [Native scholar] would even write the grant. They didn't understand [the] whole—and I'm going to just say [the] whole reason for writing this was to help Indigenous people go back to their communities—I don't think they understood it. I think they thought, 'Well, you obviously were smart enough to come to college. You obviously went through the

education system and understood it. So, what's your problem? (Laughs) I don't think they thought it was important that, you know, the cohorts were small, that there was a reason they were small. There was a reason they took these students and sort of were creating a curriculum for them to take back to their people. I don't think they cared. . . . I feel like the university just wants numbers, just wants to say we have x amount of Indians here. . . . They see us as numbers.

CHAPTER 6

WISDOM IN DIFFERENCE

"It's not a wonder when American Indians struggle; it's a wonder
when they don't or when they find ways to succeed."

"I BOUGHT A NEW HOUSE!!!!!!!! You have to see it, it's beautiful."

In this dissertation, I have interrogated tensions in Native and non-Native constructions of presence and performance. Utilizing primarily an Indigenous Studies lens and a CIRM perspective, I have detailed how participants rivaled (enacted, received, described, and interpreted) intercultural exchanges concerning presence and performance with consequential results. I found that constructions and tensions are related to iterations of sovereignty, including survivance/integration and separation/rhetorical sovereignty. In the data considered here, Native participants enacted survivance. They considered the contexts confronting them and enacted transmotion within the small fissures or cracks of history to ensure their future individual possibility. When they needed to see larger community benefit, Native participants migrated survivance into rhetorical sovereignty, which required constructive group action rather than individual self-determination. Together, Native participants confronted oppressive contexts in ways that were intended to bring benefit to their larger Native communities. They took direct communitist action concerning how, what, and why they were taught, as well as how they preferred to learn and interact in a university setting.

What We Know

These findings establish another grouping of evidentiary research—one more data set in one more localized setting on the heels of other data sets in other settings—that calls for direct action regarding American Indian education. It is important to remember that data gathered at this research site parallel knowledge gained from earlier studies of American Indian education. The findings of this study reiterate the factors noted earlier as essential for successful American Indian education with only slight variation. These findings include:

- Understanding of sovereignty and trust obligations
- Native faculty and personnel who are able to effectively implement culturally responsive curriculum
- Culturally invested and academically skilled administrators and teachers who practice respect, relationality, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity
- Strength-based support that addresses Native-identified need
- Community benefit through community problem-solving
- Praxis that honors Indigenous difference through talking, deep listening, and doing

These factors necessitate a depth-and-breadth understanding of self-determination as a separation based on an Indigenous ethnie, affirming a commonality of cultural and historical experience, affording communities distinct political and educational rights, and acknowledging communities' unique power and ability to govern themselves.

Sovereignty in educational contexts, as the list above indicates, means Native faculty and personnel in charge and curriculum that reinforces community-developed concepts while still meeting state and federal requirements. Native participants were quite clear about the "need to have a person that listens and wants to help us with our needs, somebody that really knows American Indians and how they think, you know?" ("We know the superficial people. Just like students understand which teachers care about them, we know who cares about us.") As one participant said, "We have to have an individual or individuals that really will support the American Indians that are going to school. It's a huge transition. I mean, if

you come right off the reservation, and go to a university setting." Another said, "We need representation, good representation."

Sovereignty also means, then, drawing on "community members to design and implement an educational program tailored to local needs," one that includes "school faculty, administrators, parents, and staff involved in other federally funded school projects" (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1994, p. 37). It means having Indigenous staff, "people who started with the program [and] are still here" (p. 36). One participant noted a caveat, however: these people have to be courageous enough to voice their concerns as accountable members of Native communities. They must not merely kowtow to university authorities.

> You have to find the right individuals. . . . We can't afford to have people in positions that just answer to the higher-ups. You need to have a person in there who is competent and who understands the program or programs, the culture, so they can voice their concerns in a professional way. . . . But if it doesn't happen at the university level, it's easily felt. It's easily seen. It's easily experienced.

In another participant's view, it had to be "people I could connect to, that were the same ethnicity," people who did things together such as selling fry bread and attending powwows. That participant continues, "I had to connect myself to something I was familiar with because where I was at [the university] was vast." Still another voices this interpretation:

> I think you've got to ease the fear of students. Yes, it is intimidating to come to a huge university like this. It's intimidating when you don't have the family support right around the corner. It's intimidating when you don't know anybody else here. So, that's why the program [AITE] has been excellent because we can support each other along the way. But for students who come here and don't have that support system, I feel they're at a disadvantage. Unless they already have the skills to survive here, a lot—I don't know the statistics behind that—but I would say a fair number of Native Americans who begin college don't finish college. They may last one year, maybe not even that because they're in unfamiliar settings.

Sovereignty further means instructors who "get it," who are skilled and culturally invested, who offer strength-based support and access to resources. Finally, it means resolving difficulties when they occur—and they will—by "going into the community and discussing

the program and its objectives with parents and elders [in] community meetings and individual, face-to-face communication" and by "incorporating community values" (p. 38).

The fact that neither university administrators nor departmental faculty took the time to personally meet with AITE participants as a group in their space and on their terms offended AITE personnel and students again and again. In a similar way, they resented the fact that administrators and faculty did not ask for or welcome input and involvement from a larger community of parents and elders. This was viewed as a refusal to decipher and understand what AITE participants valued, what they needed, and how they should be approached. As one participant said, "School's not just an isolated thing. Our school should really be a community center." There was little genuine interaction and even less listening at the site, and there was certainly no attempt on the part of the university to encourage (re)education ("reverse brainwashing") that indicated willingness to consider systemic change. The resultant resistance became further entrenched on both sides when those same authority figures attempted to resolve conflict by unidirectional talking 'to' AITE participants rather than talking 'with' them.

A graduate mentor embodied one exception. Della, as noted in the community reflection excerpt in Interchapter 5, exhibited an openness and willingness to feel, see, listen, and honor difference in the AITE students she mentored. ("I'm gonna understand their experiences, not change their experiences, and not try to justify or rationalize or do whatever it is we often do when we hear how people are experiencing differing things.") Specifically, she realized that the AITE students she was mentoring were resistant to EuroWestern epistemologies and university ways of being, knowing, and valuing. Accepting and understanding this, she allowed these students to test "boundaries" as they tested her commitment (her rhetoric of support) without getting defensive or angry. This earned her

the students' trust. Della accommodated their sense of protocol and adjusted her routine and schedule accordingly. She met them in their space and on their terms; they reciprocated by welcoming her into community. She says,

> For me to become a valid member of the AITE community, I had to be invited. I wasn't inducted solely by being employed as a [mentor]. I needed to take what [all the students] told me to heart and make sense of their world, their experiences, and their expectations within the university experience. I needed them to give the green light for me to join their community.

She respected them as equals and, consequently, they had relevant and "more in-depth conversations about the content being addressed in class." Della was "a sounding board and source of moral support when the going got tough." She provided "outside resources or references for them to access beyond what the professors were giving in class as a added support." Over the course of the semester, the students did the work responsibly. They "turned assignments in on time or met the consequences laid out by the course instructor" without dispute. Della says,

> I really did feel that I became part of the students' community. It took me a while to get there but, oh, at graduation, it was such like this emotional experience for me, and such this, like—I don't know—It was hard too because the program was ending. It wasn't going to BE anymore, so I think it added this element, this little bit of disappointment, but also a lot of pride in seeing how the students had grown. Makes me cry. Sorry. (Laughs through tears.) From the beginning of their programs to where they are now—I mean when I see them now and see them in classrooms—they came here because they're building a better community from where they came.

Today, Della and the students still have "amazing relationships." They meet at educational conferences, and, as she says of a recent conference, "'They wanted to go to lunch and wanted to hang out with me. (Laughs in delight.) And it was, like, 'Yay! 'Cause I want to hang out with you too!'"

Focusing on these more positive experiences, however, can sometimes lead people to believe they are the rule rather than the exception. This belief then allows them to ignore systemic issues. Everyone appears to be 'getting along' just fine. When discriminations occur

'elsewhere,' they can be viewed as isolated incidents: 'Well, that's terrible. I/we certainly wouldn't/don't behave that way.' Conversely, positive interactions can be seen as a function of exceptional circumstances. In this case, people can say, 'Well, that's wonderful, but I don't have that kind of flexibility.' *That's preferential treatment*. Even though we know programs built upon an Indigenous framework more naturally promote student success (HeavyRunner & Marshall, 2003), adjusting or accommodating to Indigeneity can be said to prevent Native students' 'progression,' (i.e., assimilation) and 'that's not going to help them in the long run. They have to learn to deal with the reality of 'our' social and educational system.' I have heard all these . . . excuses. What it really means is, 'I don't believe oppressive, racist behavior is systemic. Even if it is, it's not my responsibility. I don't have to worry about it.'

We know educational programs '*for*' Native populations work when their designs truly include 'by, with, and in.' We know programs succeed when they are founded, designed, and carried out by Native people and when non-Native personnel and institutions recognize Indigenous power as a primary and integral force. We know educational successes occur when Indigenous belief systems and values are (re)centered within the academy, and when classroom praxis works toward agency, power, and community renewal. We have known this since Rough Rock and Peach Springs. We have come to know this once again from storying and interpreting narratives of the AITE program. Yet we have also come to know, as data at this intersection of Native and non-Native exchanges demonstrates, that we do not even get as far as trust obligation funding before things begin to break down, and that break down becomes more or less evident as intercultural interactions are or are not infused an understanding of Indigenous epistemologies: respect, relevance, relationality, responsibility, and reciprocity.

Why doesn't everyone know these things? Why don't others see this? How can this be happening?

Things break down because honest intercultural exchanges are perceived as succumbing to a loss of authority or control, or as too painful, or as too dangerous. As one non-Native participant concedes, "I was willing to engage when I didn't see it as dangerous," when "association" with [AITE] was not seen as devaluing institutional knowledge or when being a part of AITE was not "judged by members of the institution" as evidence of being "less knowledgeable or less competent." At the same time, participants acknowledged a need for change: "If I was gonna walk the walk of the talk I was speaking and believed, my engagement had to stop being quite so polite. And that was difficult for me." I submit walking the walk, talking the talk, and confronting tension was difficult for everyone.

Change, as Meyer so pointedly reminded us earlier in this document, is inextricably tied to Other: Native and non-Native. Change means we must confront "difference," which in the context of this document means paying attention—together—to not only the consequences of conquest but also to future promise and possibility. It means being able and willing to see evidence (presence and performance) of Indigenous peoples' power and abilities in their complex cultures and intelligence. It means being able and willing to pay attention and participate in (re)education that attends to historic and contemporary tensions. Acknowledging difference allows me, for instance, to study Indigenous issues and advocate in Indigenous peoples' behalf. It allows those same Indigenous peoples to perform sovereignty and to decide whether and when they will call upon scholars/researchers (like me), faculty members, and administrators to participate in their struggle. Understanding these conditions opens up presence and performance to critique. It all begins in difference. If one can allow difference as a beginning point, one can critique the construction of certain differences as oppressive. We can especially critique performances by those who absent themselves from dialogue and who refuse to see oppression in the absence of Native

programs. As one participant says,

> I'm really disappointed that the program is no longer here at the university because it was just gaining momentum, and Native America had just started to hear about this program and now it's gone. It's definitely benefited our lives. It will benefit our children and their children. It's gonna be a generational thing because of the program that existed like the one we participated in. Now, it's gone. It's going to affect other generations because it's not here. I wish there were an easy answer.

"We're all more alike than different in the end, no matter what."

Notions of and desires for sameness in educational venues are subtle, however, and continue to be seductive. Recently, I attended workshops given by well-respected scholars whose work concerns promoting a multi/translingual approach to higher education. Based on post-structuralist/post-colonial frameworks, these scholars asked attendees to consider how we negotiate and interpret difference within the university classroom. What, they asked, are the implications of difference for multi/translingual students? What is (not) noticed or absent? Do we read difference as correctness or error? Do we recognize these differentiations as contingent, especially given that "the visceral is cultural"? How do we make choices about which languages and/or discourses (rhetorics) to draw from when speaking about difference? Do we realize the influence these choices wield? Do we recognize how these choices affect the ways, means, and reasons we speak and attend to difference in the first place?

The scholars went on to explain their thinking about difference and emphasized that words are not things themselves; rather, they are representations of things. Since we use words (and, I would add, images) to represent difference, we come to understand that difference is also not the thing itself but an interpretation of the thing. The words we use to speak about difference thus influence the ways we interpret difference. Additionally, in the scholars' interpretation, difference is multiple and ever-present for everyone. Since we all

experience difference, in other words, we have no reason to exoticize it. Nor should we see it as residing in particular populations (or if put in the terms of this study, in particular presences/absences and performances). Furthermore, it is not just a problem or challenge for 'others;' and, they suggested, we could see this playing out by noticing representative difference in even canonized texts.

In encouraging us to pay attention to difference and the way difference can be represented and interpreted, the scholars' stance aligns with much of the argument of this dissertation. It implies inherent hybridity within human subjectivity. Multiple subjectivities and intercultural situations provide a base from which students do (re)present and perform. One Native student explains,

> It's important to be seen because [other Native students] need to know that there are individuals who have succeeded in this environment. I really think it's very important that we understand that you can live in both worlds simultaneously. You don't have to be one or the other. You can be both. Sometimes we use that as an excuse: "Well, when you leave, you have to act just like the dominant society, which means you have no values, you have no beliefs, you have no culture. You just follow what everyone else is doing. You're not an individual anymore. You're just one of everybody else." Whereas, you *can* have an identity.
>
> I really like what they're doing down home on the reservation. They have language immersion schools now. They value that. There are more tribal colleges popping up all over the country. All of those things are going to make life better for our people. But my advice is you can live in both worlds. You just have to have the tools and the support system behind you to be successful.

Indeed, as it relates to this dissertation, multiple subjectivities and hybridic situations can be seen to form the rationale for Native enactments of survivance. As we learn from the literature, this requires individual adaptation, resistance, and accommodation as a response to shared intercultural circumstances.

Yet as I have shown earlier, attending to difference solely in light of hybridity, integration, and survivance is not enough:

> A lot of minorities—I'll just speak of Native Americans—there is an issue of identity that they struggle with. And it's nothing new, you know. There are plenty of studies out there that talk about that. But if they can just know that there's a support system there that they can draw upon, they'll be successful. Could we have survived through this education adventure that we've been on without the support? I don't think so. I really don't think so.

Survivance that does not migrate into rhetorical sovereignty does not allow Native students to fully "find home." It does not account for or assert a communitist stance that works toward larger community benefit. Paying attention to difference using a hybridic defining theoretical lens then means that difference actually becomes flattened and universalized. *"We are all the same."* We all experience difference; it is not such a big deal. *"We were all treated the same."* While this understanding is valuable in some measure—just as an understanding of the uses and limitations of integration and survivance is valuable—this dissertation reminds us that differences are not always equitable, and because their significance is a matter of degree, a degree of separation must also exist. It is a matter of sovereignty for survival. The idea that we are more alike than not, as the section header quote suggests, thus becomes problematic. *"They shouldn't be given special treatment."* Implications of difference associated with being Native, as the data presented in this dissertation illustrate, are unlike those associated with being non-Native, and a focus on words/language/survivance (a piece) can deflect attention from key issues underlying (the whole of) historic and political Native sovereignty. There is danger in conflating difference in terms of language use with difference by virtue of race and colonization.

To be fair, the scholars' focus on language issues is a useful disciplinary choice. It certainly does not represent "loud objections" to discussions of race and colonization; but, by not explicitly addressing the elephant in the room (to use the phrase put forward by a participant earlier), it does indicate a subtle shift that evades responsibility and glosses to some degree the presence of systemic inequities (Dees, Godbee, & Ozias, 2008, for a similar

argument, web). Difference cannot be glossed over by an appeal to hybridity, integration, or survivance. As we have seen in preceding chapters, differences have weightier consequences and come with heavier surveillances for student populations who belong to sovereign nations set apart from but residing within the US. If canonized texts and curriculums show signs of difference, the lesson to be learned is that certain scholars/texts can be applauded for it. This is rarely the case for those who are (re)presented as outside the scholarly, standardized, norm(*alized*) circle, who stand as Other.

I discuss the scholars' workshop in this final chapter to reemphasize how survivance/integration and rhetorical sovereignty/separation debates get subtly taken up in academic settings to the detriment of those who participate in programs like AITE. Specifically, I wish to focus attention on difference and separation rather than integration as an issue of understanding (comm)unity differently. In Interchapter 5, I presented varying ideas from participant interviews concerning community. Participants discussed how it is defined, felt, and understood. They explained the responsibilities associated with community. They emphasized it is neither a hobby nor an entitlement. Finally, one Native participant reflected on discrepant ideas of community held by those invested in a White-dominant university system. Rivaling these excerpts, and reflecting upon the experience just shared, I have been made aware, once again, of deep contradictions between ways of theorizing and understanding difference in community, particularly as it relates to Native and non-Native populations in academic contexts.

Understanding (Comm)unity Differently

During their first semester coursework at Western—when they were still adjusting to the university environment and had not yet experienced the kinds of discriminations that

would later bond them in opposition to the local academic community—AITE students were seen as "mutually supportive" of their larger cohort and class members. According to one instructor, they "did not form a cohesive philosophy that was contrary to what the whole class was trying to develop." They were viewed as integrated into an academic discourse community and not as working solely toward Native communitist ends. Their presence was interpreted as signifying "highly individualized people" whose performances denoted "nothing that distinguished [them] from any other." (I insert this quote with a great sense of irony.) In interviews such as this one, instructors implied a preferred community, one that resided in their classrooms and within the departmental program of study or within the university. They related their general sense that Native students should want to be part of this academic and professional community in order to increase their social, cultural, and/or economic capital.

At the same time, non-Native instructors acknowledged that AITE folks did, after all, share "a community as 'others' within the community, the wider institution of the university." It was "almost like there were assigned places where the [AITE] people would be and then the other students would be." For instructors, "it was probably a physical kind of, uh, difference resulting in orientation toward one group and then the other, and it was hard for them to bridge it sometimes." Although there were attempts to reconcile difference and "make a community" out of the academic classroom, Native student identity "was tied to the larger community of 'other' that they held as members of AITE." A Native participant said, "We're doing things together as families. We get to know their kids. It's the community that we've set up for ourselves to help us grow. . . . [we] had that community to rely on to get where [we are] at today." One instructor noted, "It was like we were running two simultaneous cohorts that were very, very different." For teachers in the course of study

program, "it was about getting a job and making a living," whereas for students "it was about changing [Native] communities for the better in very specific ways." As a participant notes, "The end result [just completing the degree] was not where the focus was. So we knew things differently."

Differing knowledges surrounding what constituted (comm)unity raised important tensions, again directly relating to nationhood and sovereignty. Instructors were perhaps unable to recognize AITE students as being communitist because the community they created was based on ethnie rather than tribe or nation. It thus became less real because it did not represent a local/tribal unity (both a reality and a simulation), where instructors understood community as residing. One instructor asserted that communitist representation "wasn't the reality of the [AITE] experience," at all, noting students performed a sort of "competitiveness" with one another and indicating that some students in some instances even became a "divisive" or "fragmentary force" within the AITE program. The communitist bonds AITE students established together thus seemed, as one instructor suggested, "artificial."

Later, however, the instructor conceded that students "clump[ed] themselves together physically; the presence [was] different), and it seem[ed] like there was a division." To this participant, it seemed as though the AITE community was created primarily to establish "us and them," a community coerced and "united against everything they [were] being taught." According to this participant, Native student presence and performance went "back to the list you've given of sovereignty, power, and whatnot." Although not explicitly recognizing it, the instructor did recognize that in this case—given the alienating context—a division of historic difference and life experience superseded tribal affiliation. Because the idea of ethnie was only vaguely conceived, the instructor did not recognize that students

understood Native/non-Native difference/division at another level, which allowed them to come to know and value community based on a commonality of racialized and colonized experience.

To survive in the academic space allotted them through AITE, Native students had to alternately choose whether to stand uneasily inside the academic community or deliberately outside it. When they chose to stand outside, or to resist, it was often because administrators, teachers, and even other majoritarian students asserted an implied superiority over the 'other' communities to which Native students belonged: tribal, familial, rural, and spiritual. These community values were implicated, as one mentor suggested,

> in the kinds of discussions about superiority and advancement that were happening at the university. And many [AITE students] belong to either [the dominant local] spiritual community or at least a spiritual community that was also implicated in . . . conversations about naïveté and inability to be a critical thinker or to engage with truth, not in the capitol T sense, but in a post-structuralist sense.
>
> If you couldn't go to that place of critique about everything, then you were blind in your allegiance to community. . . . I'd never thought so much about community nor felt so much about community as I did at [Western University], particularly in the position I was in terms of working with AITTP and working in a very critical field in terms of the kinds of research I was being exposed to and doing.

Sometimes, the self-education through self-determination approach of the AITE program inadvertently advanced 'difference as division,' and this too placed students in a difficult position. One graduate mentor mentioned that in some instances AITE activism undertaken as a way to further its goals unintentionally meant "using" student experiences or interaction. Even though it wasn't purposeful, it happened: "sometimes very much with the assent of students, even the goading of students, but sometimes with the real reluctance of students."

> You know, there would be a professor that continually negatively assessed students in our program over issues that I could prove were non-issues, . . . and I wanted to confront those teachers. I wanted to have a bonfire of their classroom materials. And students sometimes wanted that support but more often wanted me to . . . back off and stop using their experience in the classroom as a way to change the university in such a confrontational manner.

Students were thus left to decide which performances they should enact under these circumstances. Should it be survivance or rhetorical sovereignty? In their experience, enacting rhetorical sovereignty had not typically produced "harmony and balance" for them within this White-dominant system, where "It was always, let's stick to what can we do to fix the students to fit." Therefore, while we recognize categories of difference as both hybridic and separatist, and while we know that rhetoric and interpretation construct and constrain these categories, we cannot ignore that people live in the resulting material realities.

An End Note

The goal in analyzing the data of this dissertation has been to demonstrate "cogent theoretical and empirical linkage" (Thomas, 1993, p. 22) between Native and non-Native interactions and interpretations of those interactions. What participants thought (whether actuality or simulation) prior to rivaling (whether historical or contemporary) had to be subjected to interpretation. Despite what we thought we heard, saw, knew, or understood at the beginning of this research process, participant understandings changed and shifted, however minimally and provisionally, through attending to and rivaling this data. All participants took considered and considerable thought and care in the process. As the final author of this document, I worked to "let the data speak" to us and through us collectively (p. 22). In doing so, I too willing worked to construct more accountable interpretations leading to communitist action.

This research has illustrated interactions done right and interactions that have gone wrong. It suggests what needs to happen in order to ensure more successful educational interactions in the future. It contributes to a greater understanding of Native and non-Native interaction, particularly highlighting the presence and performance of Native students. It

nuances terms and definitions often used in Indigenous Studies scholarship—survivance and rhetorical sovereignty in particular—to explain Native presence and performance. It advances the idea of ethnie as a form of survivance and rhetorical sovereignty and rivaling as a way to practice socioaccupuncture. Finally, it illustrates interchapters as responsive, experiential, textual rivaling.

What the data provide is a solid empirical and hermeneutic base of on-going research exploring specific tensions, and in this particular research I have demonstrated a methodology and method that moves us from what we *know* concerning Indigenous epistemologies and the success of Indigenous students within higher education to what we *do*. Doing includes multiple communities involved in concrete problem solving. It means addressing hard things and implementing a socioaccupuncture that helps us work toward radical innovation based on Native community-driven need. It works transmotion and survivance to elicit real differences without polarizing people, negotiates conflict without silencing it, exposes participants to contexts of difference, and uses that difference intentionally, with wisdom. In this way, doing helps us (re)solve—however partially and incompletely—the intercultural mystery of tensions in rhetorics of presence and performance. In calling for communitist action in a more deliberate (re)centering of Indigeneity within systems of higher education, this work performs rhetorical sovereignty.

> And that's just what WE have to do. We have to take care of our own sometimes. The European culture, you know, it just goes from very individualistic, from point A to point B, you know? And nothing gets in your way; you're so narrow-minded sometimes. And they'll argue that fact, you know, but it really is. I mean, they say, "By this age, you should be this; by this age you should have this" you know? At this age you should have this much stuff in your possession. They value things that are superficial. They value things that are tangible, whereas Native Americans or other minority cultures, even certain religions, I think, they fight for their values, their cultures, their identity that way.

Interchapter 6: Dana's Reflection on *Wisdom Sits in Places*

I feel alone in the world. So far away from what I love and value, in a world that doesn't value what I know and see as wisdom and knowledge. For the first time different, and to not have that difference valued or even have someone want to explore it.

I haven't read the classics. I haven't read the great philosophers. I've come to my knowledge in a different way, in a way that I think Mom and Dad and Grandma and Grandpa would be proud of me. I've observed and I've watched.

I've lived. I've thought about hozhoo and about the beauty that exists in the harmony we create between ourselves and the majesty that exists around us. I think of Grandma lying unconscious on her deathbed. I remember vividly her hands. It's overwhelming to me

to think of those hands, which I often watched. They were old and wrinkled and had stains from charcoal or dye. I remember watching them as they wove rugs, masterpieces in their creation. I watched her hands sit patiently on her lap while she slept.

They held beauty and wisdom. The things that she had done with her hands, the work that created her wisdom. My own hands are so far from emulating what I saw and valued. Knowledge is not in me, and neither is it in this setting, or this institution. It's not valued

or respected. I cry because it's ignored. I cry because it's looked past. They see only Western knowledge, not even stopping to look at what's within my world – more here than they can possibly imagine or contemplate – the complexity, the depth of its existence. They see one

way of thinking and don't see there exists another way, my way. The beauty is not valued or seen or known or understood. Wisdom that Mom and Dad and Grandma and Grandpa hold, it's not acknowledged. There's beauty here, within me and within my mind, within

My people and my culture. There's beauty in hozhoo, a peace and calm and wisdom that exists, untapped and unvalued. It's more than personal. It's me and my people and my loved ones that are trodden down.

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